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## Information Outlook, June 2011

Special Libraries Association

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JUN

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V 15 | N 04

# information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

## FUTURE READY

Collaboration    Adaptability    Community

Emerging  
Opportunities

Strategic  
Shift

Effective  
Alignment





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# information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

## FUTURE READY

Collaboration Adaptability Community



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# information outlook

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# Changing Our Own Behavior

**SLA is focusing on offering tools and services that are timely and practical and can help information professionals increase their value to their organizations.**

BY JANICE LACHANCE, SLA CEO



Is the worst of the recession over yet?

The numbers suggest it is. According to Information Today, more libraries (especially public and academic libraries) are projecting spending increases for 2011 than are projecting decreases. Even better, libraries of all types say that improving customer service and educating customers about tools that can help them access information are their top priorities for the coming year. This contrasts with previous surveys showing that libraries were focusing mainly on trying to keep the lights on.

If these projections hold true, I suspect many librarians and information professionals will be tempted to breathe a big sigh of relief. But the challenges facing our profession aren't limited to budget constraints. Reducing information overload (a recent article in *Newsweek* says psychological research shows that too much information can paralyze the brain's ability to determine what's important and make decisions), demonstrating return on investment, developing a mobile strategy, staying current on industry trends and practices—these and many other pressures will remain with us regardless of our financial situation, and they must be resolved if we are to increase our value to our organizations and make ourselves indispensable resources.

Even before the recession started, SLA was working to develop strategies and tools to help librarians and info pros address these challenges. Through the Alignment Project, SLA has been focusing on helping members communicate and demonstrate

who they are, what they stand for, and, most importantly, what they can deliver. Many SLA members have been drawing on the Alignment Project's research to make positive, lasting contributions to their organizations and

zation's mission and vision; and

- Guidance on marketing your services and skills to clients so they will see you as the best solution to their information needs and challenges.

The toolkit is one of many initiatives—some that will benefit you directly, others indirectly—to help prepare SLA members for the future, increase their perceived value, and expand the opportunities available to them. Another is the *Future Ready 365* blog launched at the beginning of this year by SLA President Cindy Romaine. Cindy set an ambitious

**We know that librarians and information professionals, like the members of every other profession, must change constantly to remain relevant to their organization.**

prepare themselves to meet new challenges and opportunities.

To make it easier to use the research findings on a day-to-day basis, SLA members and staff have developed a toolkit that contains resources for everything from building top-notch professional networks to developing and updating resumés to engaging stakeholders. The tools, which will be updated periodically for relevance and to incorporate emerging trends, include the following:

- A dictionary of the best terms and ideas to help you articulate the work you do and the value you can provide;
- A guide to building internal and external networks that can lead to personal and organizational growth;
- Advice on framing key questions you will need to answer so you can align your goals and those of your information center with your organi-

goal—a new blog post for each day of her term as president—but people from all sectors of our industry have stepped up and delivered, and their contributions have been provocative, inspiring and thoughtful. Set up an RSS feed today so you don't miss a single post.

Yet another initiative is a pilot project to understand and build loyalty to SLA and its units. More than two dozen chapters expressed interest in the project, which is designed to increase member retention rates, enhance member participation and engagement in SLA, and encourage member advocacy on behalf of SLA and the profession. While these may seem like benefits for SLA rather than individual members, keep in mind that these outcomes will result from taking a hard look at the value opportunities that SLA offers its members and our desire to bring more professionals into your networks.

James Kane, our SLA 2011 closing

keynote speaker, is leading the pilot project and will announce the name(s) of the chapter(s) selected for the project at the conference. In an interview in the March issue of *Information Outlook*, he stated, "SLA will become a better organization when it starts to focus even more on the things that matter to its members, the things they really care about, the things that make their lives better and easier. And when SLA starts focusing more on those things, its members will become loyal. It's not because SLA is trying to change its members' behavior, but because it's trying to change its own behavior."

So, what is SLA doing to change its behavior? We're changing our approach from providing a wide range of programs and services—some of which were never used enough to justify their investment—to providing those that are of greatest interest and benefit. For example, we're offering fewer Webinars

this year, but ensuring that the ones we offer are devoted to timely, relevant topics and filled with practical, hands-on information that can be implemented immediately. So far, the attendance levels and feedback are confirming that we're on the right track.

We're also trying to identify low- or no-cost opportunities to provide new benefits. In this issue of *Information Outlook*, for instance, you'll notice we've launched a new column titled "Market Share." The subject of the column, as you might guess, is marketing, which SLA members consistently rank as one of their biggest challenges. Jill Strand, former chair of SLA's Public Relations Advisory Council, is in charge of the column, and I'm sure she'd love to hear from you if you have ideas about topics.

These are just some of the things SLA is doing to prepare you to adapt and thrive, even in difficult environments.

We know that librarians and information professionals, like the members of every other profession, must change constantly to remain relevant to their organization. As always, feel free to contact me at [janice@sla.org](mailto:janice@sla.org) and let me know what else we can do to help you succeed. **SLA**



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## ALIGNMENT TOOLKIT • RISING PROFESSIONALS

**Tools Available to Implement Alignment Research Findings**

SLA members and staff have created several tools that will help information professionals put the findings of the SLA Alignment Project to use to enhance their services, their organizations and their careers.

The tools, located in the wiki spaces on SLA's Website, represent a blend of outcomes from the Alignment Project research, timely and professional insights on emerging technology uses, and opportunities for adaptation to emerging trends. Using the tools, SLA members can—

- Write a marketing plan for their library or information center;
- Produce and present a budget to management;
- Articulate their value using terms that resonate with employers and clients;
- Engage upper management and stakeholders; and
- Frame and make decisions as they prepare to leave graduate school and enter the information profession.

To access the toolkit, visit [wiki.sla.org/display/future/Home](http://wiki.sla.org/display/future/Home).

**SLA Names Five Rising Stars**

Two chapter presidents and a chapter president-elect are among the five up-and-coming information professionals who have been named Rising Stars of the Special Libraries Association for 2011.

Sara Batts, Clara Cabrera, Lisa Chow, Ashley Conaway, and Christina Pryor will be recognized this month at the SLA 2011 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO in Philadelphia for their exceptional promise of leadership and contributions to SLA and the information profession. All five women recently started their careers as information professionals, and all have been members of SLA for fewer than five years.

Batts is a senior research librarian in the London office of Reed Smith

LLP, an international relationship law firm with offices in the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Although she joined SLA just two years ago, she is already president of the SLA Europe Chapter and international relations chair of SLA's Legal Division. She has also served as the chapter's bulletin editor, supported the First Five Years Council of SLA, and helped implement social media and Web 2.0 tools within her chapter.

Batts organized a session at the Internet Librarian Conference in the United Kingdom and has presented at various other conferences. She received her master's degree in information science from City University and is currently a PhD candidate at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. She has her own blog, [www.uncookeddata.wordpress.com](http://www.uncookeddata.wordpress.com).

Cabrera, a reference specialist at the law firm of WilmerHale, got involved with SLA while still in library school, serving as treasurer for SLA@Pratt, a student chapter of SLA. After graduating from library school, she volunteered to serve as joblog coordinator for the New York Chapter, providing chapter members with resources and local job opportunities. In 2010 she became the library school liaison for her chapter, working with six local graduate schools to notify faculty of scholarship and networking opportunities.

Cabrera has since led an SLA Career Kickoff at St. John's University and the first SLA-NY Student Swing, which allowed library school students from five area schools to discuss future career paths with a panel of top library school students. She advises information science students in the New York metropolitan area and remains active in the New York Chapter as library school liaison and a member of the SLA-NY Advisory Board.

Chow maintains the Website and intranet content for the Brooklyn Public Library and manages a few special proj-

ects such as Book a Librarian, a user-centered reference service through which patrons can reserve one-on-one sessions with librarians for research assistance. After joining SLA in 2008, she volunteered to be the Webmaster for SLA@Pratt and thereupon redesigned the chapter's Website to incorporate social media and Web 2.0 tools and established a wiki for the chapter's officers to facilitate recordkeeping. She proposed and helped plan the first annual SLA@Pratt Career Fair, then spoke at the event immediately following her graduation. She also co-organized the Library Workers' Skill Share event, a series of workshops offering mentoring sessions.

Chow has been named a *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker and an American Library Association Emerging Leader. In November 2010, she co-authored an article at LIScareer.com, "In Library School or Job Hunting? Tips to Build Up Your Professional Career." She currently chairs the Medical Section of the Biomedical and Life Sciences Division of SLA.

Conaway is the information analyst at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, where she trains staff to use various products, technologies, and collaboration tools. Currently the president of the SLA Maryland Chapter, she joined the association in 2006 while a library student at the University of Pittsburgh and became vice president of the SLA Pittsburgh Student Group that same year. In 2007, she served on the Planning Committee for the SLA Maryland Chapter's Technology Day Conference; the following year, she became a director of the chapter. She implemented various Web 2.0 and social media tools, created the chapter's Facebook and LinkedIn pages, started its Flickr photo album, and advised on Web development.

In 2010, while serving as programs chair for the Maryland Chapter, Conaway co-chaired the Planning Committee



Sara Batts



Clara Cabrera



Lisa Chow



Ashley Conaway



Christina Pryor

for the Xtreme Reference Conference, which attracted more than 300 attendees, 10 sponsors, and 18 exhibitors from across the United States. That same year, she also co-authored a paper titled “Designing for Information Discovery: User Needs Analysis.” The paper is available online at [www.jhuapl.edu/techdigest/TD/td2803/32Conaway.pdf](http://www.jhuapl.edu/techdigest/TD/td2803/32Conaway.pdf).

Pryor is manager of the Reference Department at the St. Louis County Library in Missouri. Currently the president-elect of the St. Louis Metro Area Chapter, she is also the public relations chair of the Missouri Library Association, where she has been a

member since 2007—the same year she joined SLA while a student at the University of Missouri.

As the St. Louis Chapter’s first fundraising chair in 2008, Pryor spearheaded fundraising efforts such as a student-oriented silent auction and a community trivia night. The success of these efforts allowed the chapter to establish an annual scholarship fund, which provides money to a chapter member to attend the SLA Annual Conference. Pryor was later the chapter’s public relations chair and assisted in recruiting members and analyzing the chapter’s recruitment strategies.

The Rising Star Awards are sponsored

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## LETTER

### What Not to Present as Our Image

I was compelled to comment on the article featured on page 8 in the March 2011 issue of *Information Outlook*. I am in favor of plans to update the image and brand of library staff; however, I was horrified to see the choice of photos in the article.

In my opinion, those four photos were

examples of what *not* to present as our public image. I would wear something more professional (i.e., something more formal and current), despite my lesser salary as a library technician.

I thought Ms. Olguin’s example of wardrobe and hairstyle choices looked dated and overly casual. I think she could look comfortable, approachable and sophisticated if she wore classic pieces similar to the items Audrey Hepburn was often photographed wearing, plus an unstructured jacket, unique jewelry, or other accent.

Mr. Stankus might look more current

if he lost 10 pounds and tried wearing clothing similar to what Bono or Elton John are sometimes photographed wearing (dark shirts with jacket, tie optional). His glasses are fun, but the rest of his wardrobe looks dated.

In the future, you may wish to feature an article involving an image consultant. If you do, include photos of real library staff, before and after their makeover consultations.

Carol White  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
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## ONLINE CONTENT QUALITY • E-BOOK CIRCULATION • ETC.

### Content Producer to Upgrade Quality

A leading publisher of user-generated content is eliminating a popular program for such content and will begin commissioning longer, higher-quality articles that will be edited and fact-checked before being posted online.

Demand Media Inc. said it is shutting down a program that allows readers to post content about any topic they choose on its eHow Website, a practice that has led critics to label the company a “content farm.” The decision was made shortly after Google announced that it would revise its search algorithms to try to detect sites that copy content from other sites or that add very little value to readers’ knowledge.

Demand Media’s business model is based on identifying popular search terms in certain categories (such as politics or health) and creating content tailored to those search terms. The company generates revenue from advertisers, which are drawn to content that ranks high in search results.

A Demand Media executive denied that Google’s algorithm change was behind the content upgrades, saying his company was interested first and foremost in meeting the needs of information consumers.

“We applaud changes search engines make to improve the customer experience—it’s both the right thing to do and our focus as well,” said Larry Fitzgibbon, executive vice president of media and operations. “It’s impossible to speculate how these or any changes made by Google impact any online business in the long term, but at this point in time, we haven’t seen a material net impact on our content and media business.”

A Google official, in a post on the company’s blog, noted that the search engine giant tweaks its algorithms regularly because new content—“both good and bad”—is published every day. Most such changes, he noted, are “subtle,” but in this case, the adjust-

ment affected roughly 12 percent of search queries.

### Publisher Sets Limit on E-Book Circulation

Saying it had “serious concerns” about its policy of selling e-books to libraries and allowing them to circulate forever, HarperCollins, one of the world’s largest book publishers, announced earlier this year that it would limit the number of times a library e-book could be loaned before it would need to be repurchased.

Under the new policy, e-books will be licensed to libraries and can only be checked out 26 times, after which time the libraries will need to purchase a new license. In a public letter to librarians on 1 March, Josh Marwell, president of sales for HarperCollins, defended the loan restriction, saying it will “balance the needs” of authors, libraries and their patrons, and publishers.

“Our prior e-book policy for libraries dates back almost 10 years to a time when the number of e-readers was too small to measure,” he wrote. “It is projected that the installed base of e-reading devices domestically will reach nearly 40 million this year. We have serious concerns that our previous e-book policy, selling e-books to libraries in perpetuity, if left unchanged, would undermine the emerging e-book eco-system, hurt the growing e-book channel, place additional pressure on physical bookstores, and in the end lead to a decrease in book sales and royalties paid to authors.”

The decision is being watched closely by other major publishers, two of which—Macmillan and Simon & Schuster—still do not allow their e-books to be circulated. Librarians denounced the new policy, saying it penalizes libraries even though they help promote books and foster a culture that supports reading.

“We encourage publishers to look to libraries as a vehicle to reach and grow diverse audiences,” said Roberta Stevens, president of the American

Library Association. “The transition to the e-book format should not result in less availability.”

### Library Journal to Become Open Access Publication

Current and back issues of *College & Research Libraries (C&RL)*, an online scholarly research journal, are now freely available thanks to a decision by its publisher to adopt an open access policy.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), which represents more than 12,000 academic and research librarians and interested individuals, announced that *C&RL* would become an open access publication beginning with the May 2011 issue. The announcement effectively terminated the existing six-month embargo on new content and made the contents of the journal, which is available at [crl.acrl.org](http://crl.acrl.org), fully accessible.

“In spite of economic uncertainty, I am pleased that ACRL has endorsed full open access in practice for its primary research journal,” *C&RL* Editor Joseph Branin wrote in an editorial in the March 2011 issue of the journal. “The intellectual value of open access, I believe, justifies its cost. Now the content of our journal will be freely available online to all around the world.”

The change was approved by the ACRL Board of Directors at the 2011 Midwinter Meeting of the American Libraries Association, of which ACRL is a division. In its resolution, the board cited the association’s support for open scholarship and access to scholarly work as the driving force behind the change.

### Readers See Screens, Paper as Almost Equal

The preference for reading text printed on paper rather than displayed on a screen is fading, especially among tablet and iPad users, according to a recent survey by Gartner, Inc.

Gartner polled more than 1,500 people in six countries (China, India, Italy,



## Info File

### Writing for *Information Outlook*

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Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States) about their experiences reading text displayed on screens versus printed on paper. The vast majority of tablet and iPad users said they find screen reading either easier than (52 percent) or about the same as (42 percent) reading printed text. Among laptop users, on the other hand, 47 percent said reading on screens is harder than reading printed text, and 33 percent reported it was about the same.

The survey found that about 40 percent of all respondents had no experience using e-readers, with those in India (75 percent) being least likely to use one. Urban Chinese respondents had the highest familiarity with e-readers and also the highest percentage reporting that e-readers were easier to read, perhaps reflecting the relatively high income and education level of the sample in China.

Gartner researchers cautioned that the growing preference for screen-based reading—which is strongest among younger age groups and weakest among those aged 40 to 54—does not represent a linear trend toward one medium and away from another.

"The evidence from our research is that print and online are not generally regarded as direct substitutes by consumers," said Nick Ingelbrecht, research director at Gartner. "Something more complicated than a straightforward substitution of print to digital media is taking place. Content, publishing, and media organizations should market the synergies of multichannel products to consumers, stressing the benefits of having both print and online access, rather than selling competing stand-alone products."

The survey report, *Survey Analysis: Consumer Digital Reading Preferences Reveal the Exaggerated Death of Paper*, is available on Gartner's Website at [www.gartner.com/resId=1651116](http://www.gartner.com/resId=1651116).

## Information Users Say They Understand Copyright, but Managers Disagree

Workers who use information in their jobs say they understand copyright

restrictions and how to use copyrighted materials, but those responsible for managing information in organizations aren't so sure, according to a recent survey by FreePint.

When asked to rank their agreement with the following statements, information users rated themselves much more highly than did information managers.

- I understand policies to address potential misuse of copyrighted material.
- I know whom to contact with questions about copyright.
- I know what is expected of me with regard to copyright risk management.

Users gave themselves a rating of 3.56 on a 4-point scale for their understanding of risks; managers gave users a rating of only 2.92 on the same survey item. Users rated themselves 3.53 for understanding their responsibilities and 3.47 for understanding expectations; managers rated them only 2.76 and 2.81 on the same items.

On a more positive note, the research found that information managers have been successful in communicating about copyright risk and have raised awareness among workers about their role in managing it. The research also found that information users are committed to supporting their organizations' policies on copyright, even when they find them confusing.

Information managers told researchers that their approach toward copyright focuses primarily on usage restrictions and incorporates mostly ongoing and one-time training. Many managers noted, however, that they are actively investigating technological solutions to reduce their reliance on correct human action.

The researchers warned that the ratings disparities indicate potential risk areas within organizations. A gap between policy and practice or between confidence level and actual knowledge suggests places where errors can creep into operations. **SLA**



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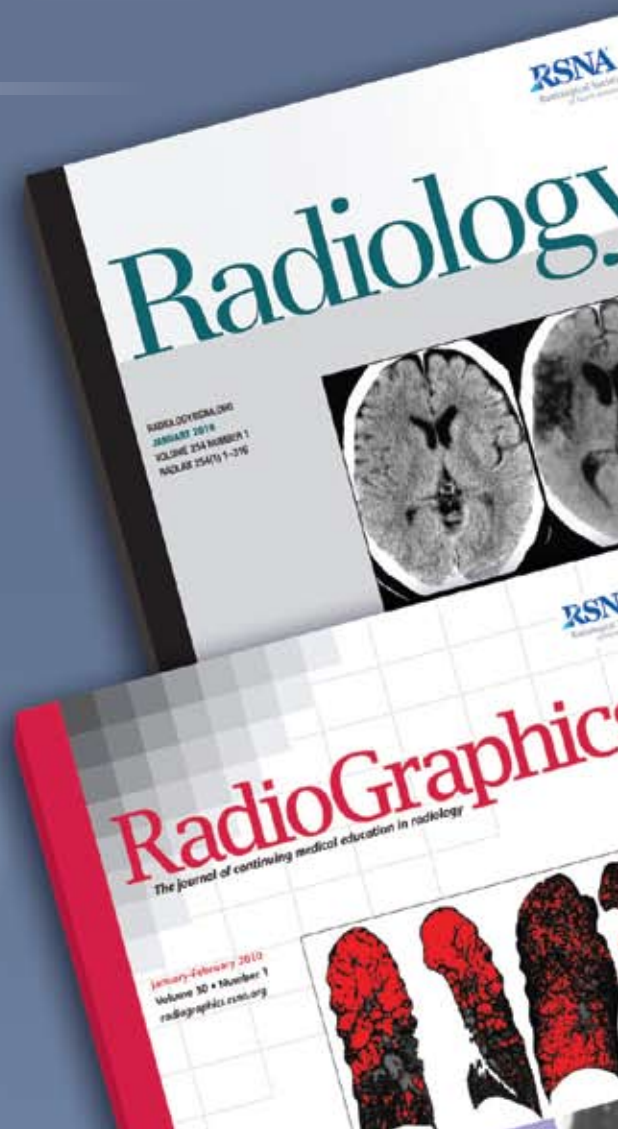
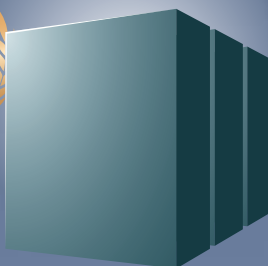
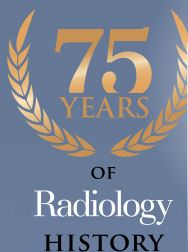
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# Accepting the Challenge

LIBRARIANS ARE RESPONDING TO THE CALL TO BECOME 'FUTURE READY' IN WAYS AS DIVERSE AND INTERESTING AS THE INFORMATION PROFESSION ITSELF.

BY STUART HALES

*As I start my year as SLA president, I'd like to pose a challenge to you, your clients and our association. The challenge is to become "future ready"—that is, to prepare yourself for your desired future.*

It's been almost six months since Cindy Romaine wrote those words for her "Info View" column in the January/February 2011 issue of *Information Outlook*. Since then, information professionals from around the globe have accepted her challenge. They've learned new skills through Webinars and certificate courses offered through Click University; they've expanded their professional networks by playing more active roles in their chapters and divisions; and they've helped develop a

toolkit that makes it easy to put the findings of SLA's Alignment Project to use. This month, more than 3,000 of them will spend four days expanding their horizons, sharing ideas, making and strengthening connections, and revitalizing their careers at the SLA 2011 Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO.

This issue is an affirmation of the benefits of becoming "future ready." In it, you'll find articles about a few of the guiding principles of this theme—being more adaptable and flexible, building and strengthening networks with other information and knowledge professionals, and aligning with emerging and robust opportunities in the information industry and beyond. You'll also find articles that, while not directly related

to the theme, address issues that speak to the need to become essential in the new knowledge economy—how to succeed in an embedded role, how to position your library as the creative and intellectual center of your organization, and how to become more ethically aware.

These articles, informative though they are, only scratch the surface of what "future ready" means to our profession. Following are some other lessons, excerpted from posts to the *Future Ready 365* blog. To read more of them, visit [futureready365.sla.org](http://futureready365.sla.org).

**Seth Godin recently blogged on the** topic of "Reject[ing] the Tyranny of Being Picked." I cannot think of a more pertinent and helpful concept in making ourselves "Future Ready." We have grown up waiting to be "picked," whether it is for teams on the playground, for "Mr. Right," to be recognized for our great service/profession, for the next promotion, or for some wonderful employer to somehow find our resumé on LinkedIn.

**STUART HALES** is publications editor at SLA and editor of *Information Outlook*.



The best advice I can imagine is to stop waiting to be picked. And DO something. Any little next action is sufficient as a start. The best career move I ever made is when I took a half-day, figured out why I was bored, and then decided what one next physical action to do about it. When you become proactive, you begin the journey of making your own future. This, of course, is the best way to be “future ready.” If you want to learn more about being proactive and having goals, read Stephen Covey. If you want to begin to realize the power of “next actions,” read David Allen. But the main thing is to stop waiting. And, as Seth puts it, “Pick yourself.”

—Dale Stanley

**Alfred Hitchcock knew that the unknown was far more disturbing and scary than the known.** He explained it like this (paraphrasing): Four men are sitting at a table playing poker. Unbeknownst to the audience, a bomb is placed under a table and it explodes. That is surprise. In another scenario, the audience sees that the bomb is under the table, but it does not explode. They don't know when or if it ever will—and most of the time, it doesn't. That is suspense. Surprise is over in 15 seconds. Suspense can torture an audience for hours.

So, what does this have to do with information professionals?

How much do you change your life because you're afraid of what might happen? Maybe you don't speak up in a meeting and share your great idea because you're not sure if it's stupid. Or maybe you don't want to change a procedure in your library because you're worried that patrons will be upset. Or maybe you don't apply for a new job or run for an organizational office or otherwise try something new and different because something might go wrong.

To be future ready, we need to stop worrying about the “what ifs” and “somethings.” We all have our bombs under the table. Stop waiting and worrying about when or if they're ever going to go off. You may be missing out on

something great—personally, professionally or organizationally—because of it.

—Sarah Glassmeyer

**20th-century centralized institutions** were created to solve a specific set of problems: scarce resources, high production and carrying costs, cumbersome logistics and limited (by today's standards) communications.

Traditional libraries are a perfect example of a centralized institution. The cost to produce and store books, periodicals and other information was expensive and required a large amount of space. Very few people could afford to purchase their own reading collection or had the shelf space to store more than a few books. The solution: public libraries. Communities pooled their resources (taxes) to provide people with access to information.

Why have people lost their patience with 20th-century centralized institutions? The problems these organizations were designed to solve are less severe or non-existent. Put another way, it is economically possible and logistically practical for people to get what they want, when they want, how they want it. People are less interested in the product that appeals to the masses and more interested in products customized to their individual interests and needs.

Indeed, people have come to expect options and choices. And, people's growing expectations are not ending with choice. Increasingly, people expect to design, produce and manage their own experiences. They will gravitate toward institutions that help them do these things.

21st-century institutions will need to help people solve a new set of personal and social problems. This is the challenge for libraries and other public institutions—how to make the shift from 20th-century centralized practices to 21st-century platform practices.

—John Creighton

**My place of work recently announced** that we will be having mandatory social media training. Because so many of

the people we are trying to reach out to are heavily engaged in social media, it is important for us to understand what they are using and how we can use it to forward our mission.

I consider myself fairly savvy when it comes to social media, and I could complain that I have to take the training, too. But while I know how I use social media, I don't necessarily know how *our clientele* is using it. That's something we need to keep in mind moving forward: if using this stuff is going to be a part of our jobs from now on, then it is also part of our job to know how it's being used.

—Chris Zammarelli

**QR codes are barcodes that can be** scanned by phones to provide a link between the digital and the physical world. A typical example would be to scan a QR code with your smartphone and be brought immediately to a relevant instructional video.

So, should libraries go ahead and spend time and effort trying to promote QR codes? Or should we adopt a wait-and-see attitude?

I don't have any pat answers. Whether a library chooses to support cutting-edge technologies is a function of its risk appetite, available resources, strategic focus, etc. I would add, however, that while the exact implementation of technology may change, the trend itself is often pretty clear. While QR codes may or may not catch on, no one doubts that the fundamental idea of creating a quick link between physical objects in the real world and digital objects will pay off.

No one can reliably predict the future, but that's the price of being future ready: you make your bets and see how it turns out. Maybe you might decide to hold off on QR codes, or maybe you might decide to try since it requires no investment of money. Whatever you do, keep thinking of how the future might be, which will have you well posed to take advantage of any sudden shifts in environment.

—Aaron Tay

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# Preparing to be 'Future Ready'

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE MEANS BUILDING ADAPTIVE SKILLS THAT WILL ALLOW INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS TO HAVE AN EVEN GREATER IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS.

BY ROSE A. MUELLER-HANSON, PHD, MEREDITH FERRO, PHD, AND JOHNATHAN NELSON, MA

**T**he information industry, like many others, is complex, dynamic and ambiguous. New technologies are emerging regularly, with the potential to completely transform the way information is collected and disseminated. Organizations are increasingly focusing on collaboration and knowledge sharing for competitive advantage.

To capitalize on these trends, infor-

mation industry professionals need to develop their own adaptive capabilities as well as the capabilities of their organizations. In recognition of these challenges, the Special Libraries Association (SLA) has established the theme of Future Ready for 2011. According to the SLA Website, being "future ready" means adopting "an attitude of being more adaptable, flexible, and confident in utilizing the skills of the information

and knowledge professional" (Special Libraries Association 2011).

In our work with numerous military, government, and private sector organizations, we have observed that developing adaptive capabilities is essential for organizations and individuals to meet the challenges of the future. In this article, we draw on these experiences and from research in the psychological sciences to offer some insights into



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how individuals and organizations can become more adaptable. We begin by offering a definition of adaptability and a brief summary of the research. We follow with some practical techniques for developing adaptability from two perspectives—developing adaptability in others and developing adaptability in oneself.

## What is Adaptability?

Although adaptability has been defined in many ways, the common thread among all definitions is that adaptability involves making a change to better fit the environment. Based on our research, we define adaptive performance as “effective change and learning in response to current or anticipated alterations in the environment or an enhanced understanding of the environment” (Mueller-Hanson, Nelson, and Swartout 2009).

A few key elements of this definition are worth noting. First, change for the sake of change is not adaptability. As our definition suggests, the change (e.g., a change in behavior) must be effective, resulting in better performance in a given situation. Second, the event that triggers the need for change does not have to come from the external environment; rather, it can be internally driven, such as when you develop a better understanding of a situation and then alter your behavior or attitudes to align more appropriately with it. Seen in this light, adapting becomes a proactive activity. The call to be “future ready” encourages this kind of adaptive response—taking the initiative to anticipate what the future environment might look like and to prepare to work effectively in that future state.

The definition of adaptability can apply to individuals, teams, and organizations. The dynamic nature of many work domains today has led researchers to focus on identifying how adaptability requirements differ across jobs. A series of studies in the early 2000s revealed nine different types of adaptability, indicating that adaptability is not one thing, but many (Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, and Plamondon 2000;

Pulakos, Schmitt, Dorsey, Hedge, and Borman 2002; White et al. 2005). The different types of adaptability are as follows:

1. Handling emergency or crisis situations;
2. Handling work stress;
3. Solving problems creatively;
4. Dealing with uncertain and unpredictable work situations;
5. Learning new tasks, technologies and procedures;
6. Cultural adaptability;
7. Interpersonal adaptability;
8. Physical adaptability; and
9. Leader adaptability.

These studies showed that requirements for each type of adaptability vary across different types of jobs. For example, handling emergency or crisis situations and physical adaptability are more important for a firefighter than a car salesman, while a car salesman may require a greater amount of interpersonal adaptability.

Is adaptability inherent or learned? From research, we know that adaptability can be developed through training and experience. While some individuals are naturally more adaptive than others, everyone can improve and develop their ability to adapt over time.

For example, we conducted one study with the U.S. Army and Marine Corps in which some trainees were given enhanced training to develop their adaptive performance and other trainees were not. The trainees who received the enhanced instruction did better on later tests of adaptive performance than the control group (Mueller-Hanson, Nelson, Swartout, and Foldes 2010).

## Can Adaptability Be Improved?

Developing the capacity to adapt means building the knowledge and skills necessary to (a) scan the environment and be alert for future changes, (b) recognize when a change has occurred or is about to occur, (c) take appropriate action, and (d) evaluate results and make further changes as necessary.

Three factors are important for building this capacity in organizations:

selecting people with the right skills for the right roles, providing ongoing development of these skills, and ensuring adaptability is supported and reinforced in the organization.

Making good selection decisions entails choosing candidates who are more likely to adapt to change. Adaptability indicators include good critical thinking skills, openness to new experiences, and a willingness to learn. One of the best ways to assess these characteristics is to ask questions in a structured interview about the candidate’s past experiences operating in environments that were complex, uncertain, and changing. Individuals who successfully navigated these challenges in the past are more likely to do so again in the future.

Selecting the right leaders is even more critical. Leaders must be concerned with not only their own adaptability, but the adaptability of their teams as well. Therefore, it is important to identify leaders who are experienced in establishing a climate of openness and flexibility, leading change efforts, and developing the capabilities of their people. Table 1 provides a list of leader behaviors that can either help or hinder adaptability.

Providing ongoing skill development often occurs informally—for example, from working on projects or assignments that entail complexity, novelty, ambiguity and rapid change. Adaptability can also be enhanced through self-development.

In formal training and education settings, adaptability results not from *what* is trained but *how* it is trained. For example, unexpected events can be included in classroom exercises, and case studies that require students to forecast the impact of emerging trends can be presented. These activities, coupled with rich discussion questions that provoke critical thinking, can help develop adaptability regardless of the subject matter.

Unfortunately, even the most carefully selected and best trained people can still fail to adapt if the organizational climate is not supportive. Ask yourself



the following questions to assess your organization's adaptive climate:

1. How much structure governs day-to-day activities? Extensive policies and procedures that dictate daily work activities leave little room for innovation and creativity.
2. How much autonomy do staff members have to carry out their work? Without the freedom to experiment with new approaches, staff members are unlikely to adapt when change happens.
3. How frequently are the following phrases used in the organization: "that's the way we've always done it" and "we tried that before, but..." Consider the implicit and explicit messages that are part of the organizational climate. If these don't foster adaptability, change the message to something that does.
4. What are the consequences for errors? If the consequences for making a mistake are severe, innovation is stymied.
5. What behaviors are rewarded? What behaviors are discouraged? That which gets rewarded gets repeated. Ensure that both formal rewards (pay and promotions) and informal rewards (praise and desirable assignments) are aligned with behaviors that are consistent with adaptability.

Changing an organization's culture is a daunting proposition, so consider starting with small changes that can still have a meaningful impact. Remember that culture is the result of what an organization's leaders say and do and what they encourage and allow others to say and do.

## Making the Journey

Research findings point to several practical strategies for improving adaptability. Implementing these strategies does not need to entail introducing expensive training programs or technology updates; rather, small but powerful alterations in daily habits can bring about significant change.

**Table 1: Leader Behaviors that Help or Hinder Adaptability**

<i>Helping Behaviors</i>	<i>Hindering Behaviors</i>
Praise efforts to offer new ideas and suggestions for improvement	Reward following the rules and adhering to procedures
Encourage others to challenge assumptions and question the status quo	Provide constructive feedback when others ask too many questions
Encourage experimentation and reasonable risk-taking	Stick with tried-and-true procedures; avoid risks at all costs
Use errors as opportunities to learn	Avoid errors; use errors as opportunities to enforce discipline
Seek feedback continuously; accept it graciously even when you disagree	Don't seek feedback; react defensively to any unsolicited feedback
When appropriate, use a collaborative approach to decision making	Make decisions in a top-down fashion; do not provide opportunity for discussion
Explain the reasons behind proposed changes and solicit feedback	Complain about proposed changes; tell others why the change won't work
Deliberately seek out information that disconfirms current beliefs	Deliberately seek out information that confirms current beliefs

Keep in mind, however, that adaptability is not a destination but a journey. Being "future ready" comes from being willing to try new approaches, obtain honest feedback about what works and what doesn't, and persist in making continual improvements. By using this approach, anyone can become more adaptable. Practiced consistently, these new behaviors become habits and, in turn, become ingrained in the organization's culture. **SLA**

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# Using Online Communities in Professional Associations

PROFESSIONAL ONLINE COMMUNITIES COME IN DIFFERENT FORMS AND SERVE DIFFERENT PURPOSES, BUT THEY ALL ALLOW MEMBERS TO CONNECT ACROSS TIME AND SPACE AND ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE.

BY VANESSA DIMAURO

**T**here is a wonderful Swahili proverb about teamwork and the value of relationships that says, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” This adage is especially true for those who are seeking to advance their knowledge or accelerate their professional skills. Indeed, this is one of the reasons professional organizations such as SLA exist.

Since 1876, when the American Library Association (ALA) was founded (Holley 1975), library professional associations have focused on increasing their members’ skills and efficiency and providing access to information. Members gathered at meetings to discuss best practices in cataloging and other areas, but naturally they exchanged more information and ideas than were indicated by the day’s agenda. They came together to discuss the details of their profession within a learning environment dedicated to advancing their skills and knowledge. This is the foundational difference between a general group of colleagues and a professional commu-

nity (either online or offline), as the latter share a purpose and context for their collaboration and idea exchanges.

Gathering and connecting with peers to share information and best practices—either in person, virtually or both—continue to be key rationales today for participating in a professional association. The difference is that today’s associations can take advantage of unique benefits offered by the information technology and communication revolutions we now call Web 2.0 and social media. Traditional person-to-person networks and peer groups will never disappear, but they are being enhanced by new forms of knowledge exchange that offer better support for professional collaboration.

## Three Key Fundamentals

It’s worth noting that online communities have been around for a while, although the current media attention to this topic would make you think otherwise. Professional online communities have existed ever since ARPANET, the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network, was designed by researchers affiliated with the U.S. Department of Defense in the late 1960s, well before the advent of the World Wide Web. Scientists soon began using electronic messaging to collaborate and communicate around the globe, and shortly afterward a number of online communities sprang up to support science and technology education.

Online communities have also been



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a key part of the academic world for more than 20 years (Howe n.d.). In fact, librarians are often cited as being among the earliest adopters of the Internet and online communities. However, the explosive growth of online activity over the last 10 to 15 years has been driven by the development of collaborative tools that are more useable and, frankly, more engaging for those who lack deep technical skills.

Today there is widespread adoption of online communities, and professional organizations are leading the way in this area for a number of compelling reasons. For these communities to be effective, however, three key fundamentals must be in place:

- The power to convene;
- An engaged group of peers who need to collaborate on substantive topics of interest; and
- A thought leadership position or cause the group is advancing.

These criteria represent the very essence of a professional association and are the reason most professional organizations succeed when they extend their existing in-person community services into the online space. Consider the many benefits a professional association's online community can offer to its members:

**Greater access to peers across geographic and time constraints.** Too often, our peer-to-peer networks are constrained by proximity—those you know or with whom you interact most frequently tend to be those who are physically closest to you. Through online communities, professionals now have the ability to find and interact with specialists or like-minded peers across the country or around the world.

**A powerful channel for sharing ideas.** MIT organizational behaviorist Don Schon (1984) wrote a great deal about the important role of reflective practice in professional knowledge exchange. Online message exchanges, such as those found in forums, encourage thoughtful, written collaboration. Using online professional collaboration,

practitioners are able to shape their ideas more richly and reflect upon the concepts and ideas they are sharing. The act of writing creates documentation that helps further professional exchanges and enables the sharing of multiple opinions in ways that face-to-face groups often cannot provide.

#### **Contextual information exchange.**

The ability to link to or embed information and other resources found on the Web enables online communities to be more relevant than physical ones. Not only can we take an online course or access a resource online, but via an online community we can engage in the interplay of ideas that occurs around information, which is the lifeblood of knowledge creation.

### **Online Community Models**

In addition to enabling peer-to-peer networking and idea exchanges, there are many reasons why a professional organization might create online communities. Some build online communities to advance their thought-leadership position, some to service their members by providing access to online tools and information, and some to generate revenue by offering products and services to their members online. Whatever the reasons, the community model must effectively support the goals for the community.

There are three general models for online communities: information dissemination, shop talk and professional collaboration. While these models are not mutually exclusive—elements of each are found in many successful online communities—each model offers a primary set of objectives and outcomes for the community. Most professional organizations face a philosophical choice about the community model they use: to reach a wide audience to support a tactical or just-in-time information exchange, or to create a relatively private, even closed community to support deeper professional collaboration and engagement.

**Information dissemination communities.** The first type of online com-

munity, the Information Dissemination Model, is where the organizing body creates the content and messages, thus shaping the direction of the community. One example is WhiteHouse.gov, which offers the public an interactive space. On WhiteHouse.gov there are feedback forms, polls, videos, and an opportunity to follow information on Twitter and LinkedIn to encourage participation. The site has some collaborative elements available, but the primary goal and mission are to share information and disseminate it outward.

#### **MODEL 1**

##### **Information Dissemination Communities**

**Goal:** Keeping members informed about your association services and how to use them

**Methods:** Company-written blogs with comments; Twitter and other social media tools to broadcast information

**Typical community hosts:** Regulated industries involved in topics where engagement is unlikely to be high

Some associations use information dissemination as a tool to encourage indirect collaboration. For example, a few associations have chosen to leverage aspects of their online communities in combination with their public face to gather information about their membership, solicit opinions through polls, and allow feedback on topics such as public policy or regulations without taking on the sizable task of managing large-scale interactivity and collaboration. The National Association of School Psychologists site ([www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)) is one example.

**Shop talk communities.** The second type of online community is the Shop Talk Model, where discussion groups focus on accomplishing a task, exchanging transactional information, or getting answers to questions such as “How can I do this?” or “Where can I find that?” The associations that adopt this model often use their communi-

ties to provide access to resources and materials, information pertaining to the running of the organization, and “how-tos” that help the professional membership solve daily problems.

For example, the Project Management Institute ([www.pmi.org/en/Get-Involved/Communities-of-Practice.aspx](http://www.pmi.org/en/Get-Involved/Communities-of-Practice.aspx)) is a large industry association that supports and certifies project managers around the world. Its online community plays a central role in helping members connect with each other and share the details of their practice. From industry-specific discussion groups to a private, members-only directory of PMI professionals, this community services the needs of the association’s members on many levels.

#### MODEL 2

##### Shop Talk Communities

**Goal:** Helping members troubleshoot transactional problems and share resources

**Methods:** Organized discussion forums that allow viewers to share knowledge

##### Typical community hosts:

Associations whose members are composed partially of consumers, such as health-related associations.

Members of shop talk communities may visit and interact on an as-needed basis, and while they have ongoing relationships with their peers in the communities, it’s often not very deep or longstanding. Members use the community to solve a burning problem or issue—a “collaborate and evaporate” experience. This model is well-suited for large groups of professionals, since there is always a resource available to meet almost every need.

Shop Talk communities can help an organization learn about important trends and issues among its members. This could lead to service innovations, fixes for prevailing problems, and tools to allow members to help each other, thus reducing staff burdens.

**Professional collaboration communities.** The Professional Collaboration Model is the third community type. As a rule, these communities are smaller and less visible than their information dissemination and shop talk counterparts. They are safe and somewhat private online spaces designed to foster conversation and longer-term collaboration. They tend to be membership-driven or subscription-based, and they consist of members who meet on an ongoing basis to gain professional knowledge within a given specialty.

#### MODEL 3

##### Professional Communities

**Goal:** Helping members solve longer-term problems that involve complex or longstanding issues

**Methods:** Participation in studies; providing white papers and other articles; holding Webinars

##### Typical community hosts:

Associations whose professional members need to share information to stay current in their fields.

An example of this type of model is the Palladium Group’s Execution Premium Community-XPC ([www.thepalladium-group.com/communities/xpc/Pages/Welcome.aspx](http://www.thepalladium-group.com/communities/xpc/Pages/Welcome.aspx)). This is a community of strategy professionals who are sharing information and best practices about the art and science of developing and executing strategies. While this community is tied to a commercial endeavor—the Palladium Group sponsors it—it is very similar to an association in that the members are at the helm of the content and thought leadership agenda. Client retention, brand management, thought leadership and deeper awareness of products and services are the objectives for this community.

Professional collaboration communities come in all shapes and sizes, from professional peer groups to client communities to those driven by news or information. But they all have a shared vision—to connect people over time

and enable them to share ideas and experiences.

## A Living Library

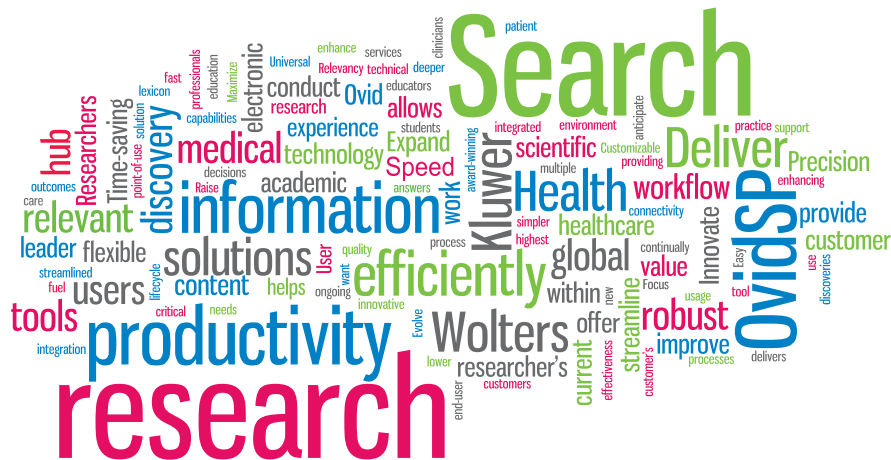
All three of these community types have a role to play. Although each has a different set of metrics, goals, outcomes and revenue models, they all contribute to the current and future readiness of an association’s members on two levels. First and most important, they offer associations the ability to help members make and sustain peer-to-peer connections to meet specific needs. No longer does proximity suffice for relevance; now, the full strength of an association’s membership base can be extended to create a learning and networking environment that’s available 24/7.

Second, they enable experienced professionals to learn the skills of online collaboration alongside their younger colleagues. These skills, and the ability to leverage them to encourage professional collaboration, will serve all association members well into the future.

In sum, professional association members with access to an online community will find it much easier to become “future ready.” They will have access to their peers, find resources and engage in dialogues about topics that matter to them on a just-in-time basis. They will also be able to find and collaborate with like-minded colleagues on a 1:1 basis or in small group settings, while at the same time sharing their ideas and receiving feedback across a wide cross-section of their profession. In many ways, online communities bring new meaning to the idea of a living library. **SLA**

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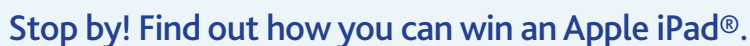
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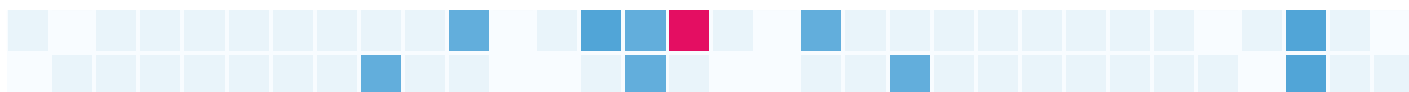


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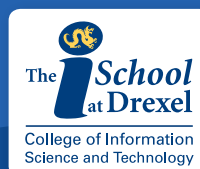
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# Aligning through Knowledge Management

BY ADOPTING A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE AND ADDRESSING THE SAME PROBLEMS AS OTHER MANAGERS, LIBRARIANS CAN BETTER ALIGN THEIR SERVICES WITH THE LANGUAGE AND VALUES OF THEIR ORGANIZATION.

BY STEVEN A. LASTRES, JD, MLS

**R**apid changes in technology and the way organizations conduct business are propelling librarians and informational professionals forward, into a world where they must adopt new ways of thinking about and managing the information over which they are stewards. This changing world presents many new opportunities for librarians. To take full advantage of these opportunities, however, we must align ourselves with the language and values of the community we serve. It is not enough to understand the needs of our clients—we must also understand our organizations.

Today's successful organizations employ knowledge workers, individuals

who are valued for their ability to use and share knowledge within a specific subject area. Knowledge workers benefit the organization by making change happen. As they perform better, change happens faster. To anticipate these changes, librarians must transition from managing information to managing knowledge and supporting the information needs of the knowledge workers in the organizations we serve.

One approach that enables librarians to achieve these goals is knowledge management. The precise definition of knowledge management (KM) is an elusive one, but one pillar of knowledge management holds that it is “the leveraging of the organization's collective wisdom (know-how) by creating

systems and processes to support and facilitate the identification, capture, dissemination and use of the organization's knowledge to meet its business objectives.”

Librarians have long been in the business of providing knowledge and information services. We serve clients who require custom products or who have specific information needs, providing them with resources at the right time and at the right price. What has changed is that librarians must also be aligned with the institutional needs of the organization for which they work. A brief review of one library environment—a law firm—illustrates the dimensions of this challenge.

## The Law Firm Environment

Prior to the advent of the Web, most of the work of the modern librarian in a law firm was demand-driven. Librarians answered reference and research questions, circulated periodicals, alerted lawyers to the tables of contents of law reviews, and pushed out news alerts,

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## Why do librarians make good knowledge managers? One answer may be that librarians tend to be eager to adopt new ways of sharing information.

among other tasks. Their aim then was the same as it is today: getting accurate and timely information into the hands of the people who can make the best use of it.

In today's global law firm environment, however, it has become far more complicated to reach internal users, who are located in offices throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia. In addition, with the advent of extranets, librarians must also support the information needs of external clients.

The array of tools available to today's librarian has driven this change. No longer restricted to offering upon-request services, law librarians must now embrace a broader view of their professional role—they must actively manage a firm's information assets rather than just passively respond to requests. These information assets may include internal documents (including precedents, models, and best practice guides), value-added annotations to existing resources, and a host of other assets far afield from the newspapers and law reviews that were formerly a librarian's major focus.

To succeed in this environment, librarians need to wear a new hat—that of a business manager. It is not enough for librarians merely to anticipate lawyers' information needs; instead, they need to understand *how lawyers work*. My own situation is instructive here. As director of library and knowledge management at a major law firm, I oversee an evolving system that not only delivers traditional library services to lawyers, but also embraces tools that can help our lawyers get more done in the course of a day. I try to be alert to both the practice of law and the business of law so I can meet the overall needs of the organization.

### KM in Action

At its heart, KM concerns itself with solving business problems. In a law firm, then, KM involves identifying business opportunities within the firm to help lawyers practice more efficiently and effectively.

For example, the lawyers at my firm are inundated with e-mail messages they need to review every day. Some of these e-mails come from the library in the form of daily updates, electronic subscriptions, and other useful but voluminous electronic content.

The library staff decided to approach this as a business opportunity. We began by asking what we could do to solve this problem, then developed a business case. We stated the current situation, analyzed what needed to be fixed, and actively searched for solutions. We estimated the return on investment (ROI), because a solution that does not save time or money is not an effective one.

After piloting a number of competing products, we decided to subscribe to Ozmosys to handle our electronic distributions. Now, instead of receiving an unrelenting stream of e-mails throughout the day, lawyers receive one e-mail at the beginning of their business day (in their own time zone) that contains an easy-to-review list of headlines from their selected information sources.

As this example demonstrates, librarians need to become business managers and address the same issues that the firm's other managers address. If we adopt a business perspective, we will see that librarians are selling a product (knowledge and information) to a market (lawyers) that needs to be serviced effectively (the right product), efficiently (at the right time), and cost-effectively

(at the right price). Figuring out how to improve upon that business model is what knowledge management is all about. When it comes to knowledge management, the emphasis should be on *management*.

Why do librarians make good knowledge managers? One answer may be that librarians tend to be eager to adopt new ways of sharing information. Librarians look at new technologies and services with an eye toward understanding how they might meet current or emerging information needs. Librarians focus on content and its seamless delivery, not on buying or developing technology for technology's sake.

Another reason is that librarians can often decipher what their clients (e.g., lawyers) need more readily than their clients can. (After all, that's what reference interviews are for!) We know the resources, we know how they're delivered, and we know how to find the information that our clients want.

Most librarians also fit well into the KM mold because they are perfectly at home in the online world. In the past, any project that lived on a server was automatically the ward of the IT department. Today, KM projects are managed by librarians. Library staff drive the selection of tools to deliver content, the adoption of interactive services (such as wikis and blogs), and the promotion of KM applications such as work product retrieval.

The role of knowledge manager is a major change in librarianship. Librarians are now innovators and "technologists" as well as content managers. As such, they should not only select the information resources that best fit the practices they support, but also participate in selecting the best delivery platforms. That includes managing the graphic

display of information on portal or intranet pages and creating a Web-based delivery system that is easy to use and search.

## Aligning with Business Goals

In addition to emphasizing the management aspect, librarians' efforts with KM must align with their firms' business objectives. The embedded librarian approach has proven successful in this regard by helping many librarians better understand how their organization works and enabling them to provide excellent support to organizational teams, units and projects.

At my law firm, librarians are assigned to support several practice groups. They attend weekly meetings and work side by side with both lawyers and administrative units, such as Marketing and Professional Development. By collaborating with these groups, embedded librarians learn to master the language and subject specialty of the practice groups they support. With this knowledge, the librarians can align themselves more closely with the values of the organization and learn about the challenges of serving international clients in a complex global environment.

Embedded librarians also are able to deliver a more sophisticated level of work product. By learning about the business and client development plans of the practice groups and the organization as a whole, they can provide business and competitive intelligence that supports the overall strategic goals of the organization.

As librarians adapt to their new roles and align with their organization's business objectives, they will face some changes and challenges. I learned, for example, that lawyers expect to receive information faster than ever. The expectation for all-but-instant access to needed information is more pressing than it has ever been. When e-mail first replaced letters and circulated memos, we saw the same expectation for lag-free communication. With blogs, wikis, Twitter, and similar tech toys available, a fraction of a second is all it takes to

think of something and then tell someone else about it.

Information not only moves quickly, it ages quickly. What knowledge managers need to do is figure out how to aggregate information accurately and quickly in order to offer real-time access to a vast store of data and documents—both from within the organization and from outside it—and then get it to their clients without delay.

Easy access to information is the aim of every good KM program. Anything that stands between a knowledge worker and the information he or she needs is an impediment. Knowledge managers need to minimize those impediments by negotiating service contracts that meet these criteria:

- Information is made available in ways that users prefer to consume it, not in ways publishers think it should be consumed;
- Users are allowed unlimited access (paying by the piece is over); and
- Passwords are not required. Passwords slow down users and are a barrier; IP authentication should be used instead.

Other considerations in selecting and deploying KM services include the following:

- Access needs to be intuitive—no training should be required. A well-developed taxonomy that makes sense to information users is key. Content ought to be logically organized. This process is a laborious one for KM staff, but it pays off in time saved by employees.
- It pays to train clients how to get the most out of the services that KM makes available. Getting the best value out of subscription services is a two-step process, in which the KM manager (1) makes sure the staff know what is available and (2) makes sure that staff know the ins and outs of searching those services.

## Experts in Three Fields

From my own experience, I can say that as knowledge management becomes more ingrained in standard legal prac-

tice, KM managers need to become experts in three specialized fields: librarianship, legal technology, and business management. Librarians need to understand the technical possibilities—not just the nuts and bolts of the software, but the research needs of the lawyers.

What's the payoff from all of this? The direct, measurable benefits of a successful KM program at law firms include the following:

- Providing the organization with a competitive advantage by creating systems and processes to support and facilitate the identification, capture, dissemination and use of the organization's knowledge;
- Increasing productivity (lawyers don't waste as much time searching for information);
- Fostering collaboration among practice teams;
- Improving response times on client requests;
- Enhancing internal professional development efforts, particularly of junior lawyers; and
- Integrating the "practice of law" and the "business of law."

The changing business world means new opportunities for librarians to be "future ready." As librarians redefine themselves as KM managers and become more closely aligned with the language and values of the organization, they are better positioned to support the knowledge workers of tomorrow and to leverage the organization's knowledge to meet its business objectives. Successful KM managers are seen as integral to the organization, and their value is undisputed. **SLA**



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# Creating Intelligent Libraries

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING MODELS OF INTELLIGENCE CAN HELP INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS POSITION THEIR LIBRARY AS THE 'BRAINS' OF THEIR ORGANIZATION.

BY CHRISTIAN MILLER, MLS

In much the same way that the brain is the storage center for information in humans, libraries are the storage center for information in an organization. (For ease of reference, the term “library” will be used throughout this article to refer to information resource centers, knowledge centers, and all of the other related terms we use for our workplaces.) As we look to the future, we need to take this analogy one step further and promote the idea that organizations need libraries in order to function, just as people need brains to function.

One approach to this strategy is suggested by the “work smarter, not harder” philosophy to which many managers and executives subscribe. If

we can position libraries as integral to meeting that goal, we will have a much better chance of surviving in times of budget cuts.

On its face, the comparison between brains and libraries is an obvious one: The brain collects and stores memories, experiences, and other types of information, just as libraries collect and store articles, books, and various electronic resources. Library items that are stored or subscribed to locally are similar to a brain’s “working memory,” the space in the mind that provides immediate access to information to be used for learning and complex reasoning. The brain’s long-term memory, which is usually more difficult to access but contains a fuller record of the total

knowledge available to a person, can be compared to services such as inter-library loan and consortia agreements that allow access to a fuller record of information than can possibly be held by a single library.

This article is not an attempt to exhaustively document the similarities between libraries and brains, but rather a call to exploit this metaphor as a framework for positioning libraries for the future. The brain is not just a static anatomical entity for storing information; rather, it is the hub of human intelligence. To bolster the declaration that the library is the center of intelligence in the organization, it is useful to explore how research on intelligence can guide librarians to expand the common perception of the library and help chart a new path going forward.

**CHRISTIAN MILLER** is the reference, instruction and outreach coordinator at the Martin P. Catherwood Library in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. He is the chair of the Academic Division of SLA and is interested in work and workplace issues (the Catherwood Library is renowned for its collection of information about these topics) and especially the library as a workplace.

## What is Intelligence?

Intelligence, by itself, can be a divisive issue; when it comes to the subject of intelligence testing, arguments can become heated and emotional. Psychologists have produced a statisti-

cal construct that effectively reduces all of intelligence to a single factor, the intelligence quotient (IQ), and to the related general intelligence factor, or *g*. Critics of this approach contend that intelligence is a complex, multivariate trait that can't be measured accurately, and that doing so discounts many of the unique abilities people possess that often don't fit easily into a standardized test.

Since psychologists cannot agree on a specific model for measuring intelligence or even (in some cases) that it can be effectively measured, I will explore a few theories here: the Cattell-Horn-Carroll Theory of Cognitive Abilities, Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, and Sternberg's Theory of Successful Intelligence. We can glean many lessons from these theories and apply them to libraries to make ourselves and our organizations more intelligent.

**Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) Theory of Cognitive Abilities.** Many recent IQ tests have been informed by the CHC model of intelligence, which consists of 10 broad abilities that, together, present an overall indication of intelligence. These 10 abilities are as follows:

- Fluid intelligence;
- Crystallized intelligence;
- Quantitative reasoning;
- Domain-specific knowledge;
- Visual-spatial and auditory abilities;
- Reading and writing ability;
- Short-term memory;
- Long-term storage and retrieval;
- Cognitive processing speed; and
- Decision speed.

Fluid intelligence involves the ability to solve problems that haven't been encountered before. Crystallized intelligence, on the other hand, is the ability to use previously known facts to solve a current problem. Quantitative reasoning is defined as the ability to use and manipulate numbers and mathematical concepts.

Cognitive processing speed is the ability to execute simple operations, and it usually involves some need for processing information. Decision speed

is the ability to respond quickly to immediate decision-making conditions, usually in even less time than cognitive processing speed requires.

**Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences.** Unlike the CHC model, in which intelligence is viewed as a single entity comprising separate factors, Gardner posits that there are several distinct types of intelligence and that there need not be any correlation between ability in any one type of intelligence and ability in any other. That said, there is a certain overlap between the intelligence types identified by Gardner and the abilities proposed by CHC.

Gardner's intelligence types are as follows:

- Linguistic intelligence;
- Logical-mathematical intelligence;
- Spatial intelligence;
- Musical intelligence;
- Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence;
- Naturalistic intelligence;
- Interpersonal intelligence;
- Intrapersonal intelligence; and
- Existential intelligence.

Logical-mathematical intelligence involves our ability to mentally process logical problems and mathematical concepts. Linguistic intelligence describes our ability to use language, both written and spoken, to explain things so that others may understand them better. Interpersonal intelligence concerns the ability to interact, understand and connect with those around you. Intrapersonal intelligence, on the other hand, entails a well-developed self-awareness of our own skills and motivations.

**Sternberg's Theory of Successful Intelligence.** Sternberg's theory, like Gardner's, encompasses more than just a single type of intelligence. Rather than the extensive list proposed by Gardner, however, Sternberg posits only three types of intelligence: analytic, creative and practical.

Analytic intelligence is similar in scope to many current psychometric tests that measure general reasoning ability. It has much in common with

the concepts of fluid and crystallized intelligence and quantitative reasoning in the CHC model and the logical-mathematical intelligence in Gardner's. Sternberg believes, however, that one must also consider creative ability and practical intelligence to get a true picture of individual intelligence. Sternberg defines practical intelligence as the ability to "learn from experience" or "learn by doing" through tacitly gained knowledge.

## Making Libraries Intelligent

These models define intelligence in different ways, but all support the idea that improving skill and efficiency in any one area can translate into a more intelligent entity overall. No matter whether intelligence is a composite of individual factors of a single type of intelligence or different types of intelligence altogether, there are definitely a number of paths we can take to make our libraries smarter based on these models. The following is not intended to be a complete list of all of the applicable traits of intelligence, but merely the beginning of a conversation about how we might apply them to our individual situations.

**Quantitative reasoning/logical-mathematical intelligence.** One common thread among the different intelligence models is quantitative reasoning ability. This trait suggests that libraries need to embrace numbers and be comfortable speaking the language of statistics.

As we move into the future, we will be required to justify our existence with quantitative metrics that are tied to the mission of our organization. Just as there is considerable controversy surrounding the measurement of intelligence, there is confusion about how to prepare effective metrics that accurately depict the impact that libraries have on organizations. Therefore, we must become fluent in conducting a logical analysis of these statistics and know how to combine them into a cohesive narrative that will resonate with the leadership of the organization.

There are a number of analytical tools that can be adapted for use in libraries. One is the Balanced Scorecard,

which combines many financial and non-financial measures and can be linked to the strategy of the organization. The Institute for Museum and Library Services has supported research applying this model to certain libraries.

The major advantage of the Balanced Scorecard is that it incorporates a wide variety of inputs into the overall value. In the Balanced Scorecard approach, for example, the customer's perspective on the value of the library is as important as the financial perspective.

**Cognitive processing speed.** In the brain, cognitive processing speed relates to how quickly operations are performed. As a general rule, it is difficult to increase this speed, but some research has shown that performing cognitive exercises such as puzzles can improve processing time. Physical exercise also has the same effect.

In the library, cognitive processing speed correlates with the organizational structure and processes we use. We can increase this speed by tracking workflows and improving the efficiency with which we deliver information to the end user. We can also flatten our organizational reporting structure so that we can respond more nimbly to new situations and organizational needs.

The lesson we must learn from cognitive processing speed is that we must not be beholden to traditional ways of organizing work jobs. The goal should be to allow decisions to be made by those on the front lines and not to require layers of approval.

**Intrapersonal intelligence.** Intrapersonal intelligence is defined as the ability to measure one's own strengths and weaknesses and to act accordingly. If we are to thrive in the future, we must be able to develop an excellent sense of self-awareness so we can objectively assess where we excel and where we need further development.

One way to learn what we do well is to ask our customers and use their feedback to effect change. There are also many opportunities for personal self-assessment that can help us gain insights into our strengths and weak-

nesses. One excellent example is the StrengthsFinder assessment, which helps staff members understand where their strengths lie.

StrengthsFinder consists of a relatively short questionnaire that reveals the top 5 strengths among a group of 31 possible strengths. We can apply the findings to make sure we are using staff in ways that build on what they already do well. For instance, if an employee who works in a front-line position is identified as having analytic or strategic strength, it would be advantageous to the organization to include him or her in the long-term planning process.

**Creativity.** Sternberg's theory is the only one that identifies creative ability as a stand-alone trait, although it is woven into the abilities that comprise the other models. This is perhaps the single most important skill we need to incubate as we move into the future, as being able to think creatively will allow us to respond to change in an appropriate and timely manner.

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to convince people that creativity is a skill and that it can be cultivated and expanded. It is, and it can be.

There are many simple tools and skills that can be used to jump-start creative thinking. One of the better known of these methods, called SCAMPER, involves a checklist of questions that can be asked to initiate the creative process. SCAMPER is an acronym for the following: substitute, combine, adapt, modify, put to other use, eliminate and rearrange.

SCAMPER asks such questions as "What people, inputs, rules or approaches can be substituted?" or "How can I rearrange schedules or components to be more efficient?" The purpose of asking these questions is to break the creative process into smaller chunks so it does not seem so daunting.

Even more important than the process of inspiring creativity is creating an environment in which it can flourish. Just as a rigid mind will seldom be creative, a work environment that doesn't openly value creativity will inevitably smother

it. Therefore, it is important to reward employees who consistently suggest new ideas and new ways of thinking. Even if the reward consists simply of an acknowledgement, it will encourage even more creative thinking.

## Going Forward

Libraries are already performing many of the functions of the human brain, either in whole or in part. This article is meant to encourage the use of this framework as a guide for developing new services and processes or expanding the scope of those already in place, based on the traits of human intelligence.

Once we have mastered these traits in our libraries, we need to incorporate them into the fabric of our organizations. Our goal should be to ensure that we are actively making our organizations more intelligent. This is a convincing argument for the necessity of the library in the organization—that it is every bit as essential to success as intelligence is.

One final similarity between libraries and the brain revolves around neuroplasticity—the ability of the brain to adapt and reinvent itself by remapping the way it has worked in the past to recognize and use new pathways. These new pathways compensate for changes, whether through physical loss of structure or through experience. Just as brains continually reinvent themselves in response to a brain injury, libraries reinvent themselves when afflicted by staff cuts and financial constraints.

However, we can also restructure our brains through conscious will based on our desire to change. By acting in advance and making informed decisions that help us, our libraries, and our organizations become more intelligent, we display our plasticity through conscious will rather than having it dictated to us through loss of structure. **SLA**



# Succeeding with Embedded Librarianship

EMBEDDED PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE THEIR ACTIVITIES, PROVIDE VALUE-ADDED SERVICES, EVALUATE THEIR WORK AND ENGAGE WITH THEIR CUSTOMER SEGMENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUCCEED THAN THEIR COUNTERPARTS THAT DON'T.

BY DAVID SHUMAKER, MSLS, MS

In 2007, SLA presented a research grant to David Shumaker and Mary Talley for the purpose of identifying and studying the factors required for embedded librarian programs to become and remain successful. Through this project, the researchers hoped to gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences among embedded library services programs and develop insights into practices that enable them to succeed.

The project had four goals:

- To define criteria of “embeddedness” for library and information services programs;
- To define indicators of success and identify successful (model) programs;
- To collect data about the practices

followed by model programs in initiating, operating, and evaluating their services; and

- To develop recommendations for other librarians seeking to implement embedded services.

The researchers submitted a final research report in 2009 and wrote an article about their findings for the January/February 2010 issue of *Information Outlook*. They then conducted further analyses of their findings in hopes of discovering fresh insights into the reasons why some embedded programs are more successful than others. In the April/May issue, Talley presented her conclusions about the factors that drive success; in this issue, Shumaker presents his.

As librarians explore ways to move up the value chain in their organizations, embedded librarianship is growing in importance. Not all embedded librarianship initiatives succeed, however, so it's essential for innovators to understand the factors that lead to success.

My colleague Mary Talley and I first addressed this need in a research report published on the SLA Website in 2009, and we followed up with an article, “Models of Embedded Librarianship: A Research Summary,” in the January/February 2010 issue of *Information Outlook*. Our analysis, based on survey data and interviews, identified four areas in which successful embedded librarians differed from their less successful counterparts: marketing and promotion, value-added services, evaluation, and management support.

Since then, interest in embedded librarianship has continued to grow. Responding to this growing interest, Mary and I spent the past year conducting a new analysis of our research data, looking for new insights on success. With the assistance of our statisti-

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The author acknowledges the contributions of Mary Talley and Wendy Miervaldis to this research.



cal consultant and collaborator, Wendy Miervaldis, we've learned a few things that have sharpened the findings of our earlier report.

## Defining Success

It's difficult to define and measure success for information services programs. Library operations rarely have their own financial statements, and their impact on organizational financial outcomes can be indirect and diffuse. Add in the complexity of embedded programs, and the task becomes even harder.

Our solution in the first stage of our analysis was to link success to measures of growth. These measures included—

- Growth in the number of professionals providing specialized services to a customer group;
- An increase in the demand for services from the customer group; and
- The development and delivery of new services to the customer group over time.

When we applied these measures to the data, two distinct groups of embedded professionals emerged: one reporting growth in all three areas (hereafter called the High Growth Group) and one reporting no growth in any of these areas (hereafter called the No Growth Group). Upon performing a statistical comparison between the two groups' survey responses, we found 22 significant characteristics that defined and separated the two groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). The differences centered around four themes: marketing and promotion, services provided, service evaluation, and management support. These themes formed the basis for our model of successful embedded programs.

In phase two, we analyzed the same data using two new measures of success: longevity and self-reported success. We hypothesized that both those in long-lived embedded roles and those with a high self-assessment would behave differently from their shorter-lived and less-highly-rated counterparts. We further hypothesized that the differences would be similar to the characteristics that separate the High Growth Group

from its no-growth counterpart.

To test these hypotheses, we first defined the criteria and then used each measure to divide our embedded survey population into constituent groups. We decided that those in programs established 10 or more years ago would constitute the High Longevity Group, while those in programs established within the past 10 years would constitute the Low Longevity Group. We further decided that those who rated the delivery of embedded information services to their customer groups as "very successful" (a score of 5 on a 5-point scale) would constitute the Very High Self-Assessment Group, while those who rated the delivery of embedded information services as "successful" or worse would comprise the Other Self-Assessment Group.

We then re-analyzed the survey data for each factor, applying the same statistical technique (small-sample discrete inference based on mid-P-value) used in the original analysis, to look for statistically significant differences between the groups. (Differences cited in the text are statistically significant at the  $\alpha = 0.05$  level, unless otherwise noted). For detailed results of this analysis, see the online version of this article at [www.sla.org/io](http://www.sla.org/io).

## Identifying Key Themes

While we did not find an exact match between the specific characteristics of the High Growth Group and those of the High Longevity and Very High Self-Assessment Groups, we did notice a number of trends among the characteristics of all three measures. These trends inform several broad findings about what it takes to be successful.

**Marketing and promotion.** In our initial analysis, three promotional strategies were associated with the High Growth Group: encouraging word-of-mouth publicity, distributing printed marketing items like brochures and flyers, and promoting library services at formal employee orientation programs. The High Longevity and Very High Self-Assessment groups shared only one of

these: participation in formal employee orientation programs. What is significant is that no matter how we define success, promotional activity of some sort seems to be a critical element.

**Value-added services.** Our research included an examination of the type of work product contributed by embedded librarians in the areas of reference and research, technology and content management, and education and training. Comparing our High Growth Group with the High Longevity and Very High Self-Assessment Groups, we did not find strong consistency in the specific nature of the work performed by successful embedded librarians. What we did find is that the successful embedded librarians contributed some form of high-value-added work product to the information user community.

The members of the High Growth Group were more likely than their peers to perform value-added research and reference services, such as in-depth topical research and competitive intelligence. The same held true for the Very High Self-Assessment Group. The High Longevity Group, however, did not perform these functions; in fact, they were less likely than others to provide value-added research services or in-depth research. This may be a result of the high proportion of academic librarians in the High Longevity Group, who may be focusing more on their instructional roles than on research roles.

In the area of technology and content management work, only the Very High Self-Assessment Group was significantly more likely to contribute to these functions, focusing on structured database development, data manipulation, and computer/network management services. Possibly these are roles that other embedded librarians will adopt more widely in the future.

Finally, in the area of education and training, our initial analysis found that the High Growth Group was more likely than others to share instructional responsibility and co-teach. The High Longevity Group also shared this characteristic (though to a lesser degree), which was consistent with the high

proportion of academic librarians in this group and their emphasis on the instructional role. The Very High Self-Assessment Group did not share this characteristic—the only education and training activity that differentiated it from the other groups was participating in manuscript preparation.

What stands out is that in every one of the three groups we analyzed, some form of value-added work seems to differentiate successful embedded librarians from their less successful peers. The specific nature of the contribution varies, due (we think) to local needs and organizational type. But the need to move up the value chain is clear.

**Evaluation.** Our initial analysis found that the High Growth Group was much more likely to engage in evaluation and to use six different measures of its work. Of these, the most striking was that the group's members tracked their impact on organizational financial outcomes, such as return on investment or cost avoidance. Similarly, both the High Longevity Group and the Very High Self-Assessment Group also used financial outcomes as a measure of their performance. This was the only measure that all three groups of successful embedded librarians were more likely to use than their less successful counterparts.

While the measurement of their financial impact stands out as a defining characteristic of successful embedded librarians, another factor is equally noteworthy: The High Growth, High Longevity, and Very High Self-Assessment Groups were much more likely than their peers to communicate their service metrics and use them to justify the continuation of their services. In other words, they evaluated their work and also communicated the results to decision makers.

**Management support.** In our initial analysis, we found that engagement by the management of the customer or information user group was the fourth differentiating characteristic of High Growth embedded librarianship programs. In fact, 5 of the 22 characteristics identified with the High Growth Group were related to management

support and interaction, including the following:

- Written work agreements with customer groups;
- Customer feedback in performance reviews;
- Customer manager support through integration of the embedded professional into the group; and
- Continuing education requirements related to the customer group's area of specialization.

When we analyzed the High Longevity and Very High Self-Assessment Groups, we did not find identical patterns of management support characteristics, although we did find some broad similarities. No single factor differentiated all three successful groups from their peers (at the  $p < .05$  level), but a few factors came close. Both the High Growth and High Longevity Groups were more likely (at the  $p < .05$  level) to require continuing education in the information user group's subject matter (for the Very High Self-Assessment Group, the probability was just above the .05 threshold, at .0551). Both the High Longevity and Very High Self-Assessment Groups were more likely than their peers to offer some form of support for this continuing education. For the former, this support took the form of tuition reimbursement; for the latter, it involved supporting attendance at conferences in relevant subject fields and offering in-house courses.

Similarly, all three of the more successful groups were more likely to involve the customer/information user in integrating the embedded librarian into the group, but the form of that involvement varied. The High Growth and Very High Self-Assessment Groups were more likely to involve a customer manager in this process, while the High Longevity Group was more likely to involve a lower-ranking member of the customer segment.

## Interpretation and Conclusion

In sum, our analysis found that there is no single secret to success for an embedded librarian, but there are a few

broad themes that recur. These broad themes are as follows:

- **Market and promote.** Whether it's presenting at employee orientation sessions or promoting their role in other ways that are more appropriate to their settings, successful embedded librarians are more likely to promote their work effectively.
- **Deliver value-added services.** Information users may need in-depth research, competitive intelligence, technology and content management, or shared responsibility for instruction. The successful embedded librarian identifies these or other critical needs and takes ownership of meeting them.
- **Evaluate and communicate.** Among the strongest characteristics separating all three of the relatively successful groups from their peers were their likelihood of evaluating their work (especially using measures of financial results) and communicating their results to decision makers to advocate for support for embedded librarianship.
- **Get management support.** We think it's important for embedded librarians to recognize that they need management support. Two areas that stand out are (1) procuring support for learning about your customers' subject matter and staying current in their field and (2) enlisting help in building and maintaining relationships with members of your customer group.

The research indicates that success as an embedded librarian depends on the depth of the engagement between the professional and the customer group and the professional's ability to develop connections. As the information professional becomes more deeply embedded in the customer group's work, understanding of the work context grows, enabling still more relevant and valuable work contributions. **SLA**

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# 10 Questions: Tom Froehlich

A LEADER IN THE EFFORT TO DEVELOP ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS EXPLAINS HOW LIBRARIANS CAN ACT UNETHICALLY AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT FOR THEM TO RAISE ETHICAL AWARENESS IN THEMSELVES AND IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS.

BY STUART HALES

**A**t its December 2010 meeting, the SLA Board of Directors approved a set of ethics guidelines for a two-year trial period, after which time they will be reviewed to determine what impact they have had and whether they need to be modified. The guidelines were developed under the auspices of the Information Ethics Advisory Council, a group of SLA members interested in professional ethics. The council is charged with, among other things—

- Advising the chief executive officer on emerging ethical issues that may inform additions and/or revisions to the ethics guidelines;
- Collaborating with the Professional Development Advisory Council on efforts to incorporate the ethics guidelines into the SLA professional competencies document;
- Assessing the potential for offering Click University programming, continuing education sessions at annual conferences, and a certificate program for information ethics; and

- Developing tools and resources for use by members in their day-to-day work and for the promotion of information ethics within their work organizations.

Tom Froehlich, director of the master's degree program in information architecture and knowledge management at Kent State University (Ohio), co-chaired the advisory council during the development of the guidelines and has agreed to continue serving in that capacity through the end of this year. *Information Outlook* interviewed him about why ethics guidelines are needed in the library field, the kinds of ethical quandaries information professionals face, and how the guidelines can benefit SLA and its members.

## **Q: When and why did you get interested in ethics?**

There were formative influences in my upbringing—family, peers, teachers (those Catholic nuns!). I seem always to have had a strong sense of social responsibility and a need for social justice, which were enhanced by many key events—for example, the Vietnam War—that occurred as I went through college and graduate school.

I earned a master's degree in philosophy from Penn State University and a PhD in philosophy from Duquesne University, and I spent four years teaching philosophy at both schools. But my interest in ethics didn't lead me into philosophy—it was actually the reverse.



**STUART HALES** is publications editor at SLA and editor of *Information Outlook*.

While I was studying and teaching philosophy, I was always into ethical issues, so when I entered the library and information science field, it was natural for me to teach and research ethical issues.

When I accepted my current position at Kent State, it was a challenge to temper my feelings about a university where such outrageous events as the 1970 killing of four students occurred. Each year we hold a commemoration that includes discussions about the event and conversations about how to avoid political violence, heal breaches and maintain democratic ideals.

**Q: The notion of an “unethical librarian” seems far-fetched. Why are ethical guidelines needed in the information profession?**

On one level, you may be right that there are few, if any, librarians who so routinely engage in questionable practices as to be labeled an unethical professional—that is, their unethical practices are so pervasive that their character is labeled unethical. Yet librarians and information professionals do engage in unethical acts or behavior, though they may often do so unconsciously.

Some examples of unethical practices are: when a public librarian offers reading suggestions to a patron based on the specific recommendations of another identified patron; when an information specialist sabotages another colleague’s attempt to obtain a better position in the information center; when he or she labels materials with a warning about their content or miscatalogs a book (so as to foster its lack of being found by patrons); when a collection developer does not include certain materials in the collection because of personal values; when the information specialist searches incompetently; or when an information specialist is told to charge a client for online searches for his or her employer. Even when the specialist acquiesces to that request, there is most likely an internal conflict—perhaps placing a high value on the preservation of one’s family, considering the dif-

ficulty of finding and retaining a job in the current economy—that runs contrary to professional values.

While the examples I just mentioned reflect unethical behavior, I would argue that all professional contexts have an ethical dimension implied in such notions as good service. We may be more aware of ethics, however, when ethical values are violated or when a problematic situation arises.

**Q: The preamble to the guidelines states, “In certain situations, ethical values may be in conflict or may demand that one ethical value take priority over another.” Can you describe such a situation?**

It’s commonly held that patrons’ privacy and confidentiality about their reading habits or information searching behaviors are sacrosanct to the information professions. There are, however, occasions where other values may trump that core value. If a librarian had a compelling belief that a patron was involved in terrorist activities or at risk of causing personal harm, then that value—avoidance of personal or collective harm—might trump the commonly accepted value. When a librarian or knowledge worker is asked by management to charge for work that was performed for personal use, the normal non-disclosure of such a transaction may be trumped by the value of maintaining the integrity of an organization.

Cases of principled ambivalence are even more challenging. In this area, my favorite example comes from collection development. A commonly held ethical value in Western culture, one perhaps best articulated by Immanuel Kant, argues that each and every human



Tom Froehlich talks with David Robins, a colleague at Kent State, about his interests in the user experience design of iPad applications.

Photo courtesy of Tom Froehlich

being has moral worth and is deserving of respect. In information work, this would imply, to echo Raganathan, “every reader his book”—that is, we should buy materials to satisfy the needs of individuals and not just the collective. Based on this principle, a collection developer might buy materials that are useful to a few or even individual patrons, such as works on unpopular political positions, sexual practices or religious beliefs. The inclusion of such materials may alienate the majority of library patrons, yet it would satisfy demands from individuals.

There is another commonly held ethical value that actions should promote the greatest amount of happiness for the most number of people—the utilitarian principle. So when the collection developer buys *New York Times* bestsellers or popular videos or music collections, he or she is embracing, consciously or unconsciously, utilitarian values.

These values—the one based on individual needs, the other on collective needs—are often in tension, even though they both serve the general principle of providing collection materials that are useful to each patron and to all patrons. I suspect that the collection developer may oscillate from one value to the other on different days, sometimes acting like a Kantian and sometimes like a utilitarian but not



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necessarily conscious of either. I think that as mature human beings, we all do this.

Is it a problem? I don't think so. But I do think this tension has become more critical given the tight budgets we've faced lately. I have a suspicion—though I have no evidence to support it—that the leaning in most libraries these days is toward utilitarian values, so that levies are more likely to be passed and budgets are more likely to be approved. This itself may be an ethical issue.

**Q: The preamble to the guidelines also states that “basic human rights” are “fundamental” to the guidelines. What do documents such as the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights have to do with ethical guidelines for librarians?**

This has been a particular concern of my colleague Toni Carbo, former dean of the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh and now program leader at the iSchool at Drexel, who co-chaired the Information Ethics Advisory Council through the end of last year. Human beings not only have the right to food, shelter, health care, and political knowledge, they also have a right to information that would facilitate such objectives. The right to primary goods, such as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, implies a derivative right to information that is consequent to upholding the moral dignity of human beings.

Having said this, to what information do individuals, groups and societies have a right? Who would pay for it, if copyrighted information were involved? How would one invoke a principle of distribution of particular information that would satisfy any notions of social justice? The answers to such questions are not always easy or clear.

**Q: During the process of developing and revising the guidelines, what key issues and concerns were raised?**

Previous groups within SLA felt the guidelines should reflect the distinctive interests and diversity of special librar-

ians and not merely repeat existing professional codes. They also wanted them to be concise, relevant to all segments of the membership, instructive, and aligned with SLA's core competencies, yet not subject to enforcement.

That last point is important. Codes of ethics can have three functions—inspirational, educational and regulatory. The code of ethics that SLA wants to propagate is, in my view, aspirational and educational. SLA wants to educate its members about the values of the profession and encourage an attitude that these are values toward which we should all aspire.

Regulatory codes tend to be rare, in part because they're problematic. Who's going to enforce them? How are they going to be enforced? And is the penalty going to matter? For example, suppose SLA says a certain librarian is unethical. What's to stop that librarian from getting another job in another library? If you're going to take a regulatory approach, you have to have control over the whole system. I'm not sure that kind of control is possible in the United States, or even desirable.

**Q: How can SLA best promote and ensure adherence to these guidelines?**

It's important to note that these guidelines are not finalized. They are being promoted for a couple of years so members can think about them, discuss them, and make recommendations for improvement.

There are several ways to facilitate these goals. They could be the focus of chapter meetings—several chapters have done this already, but it should be more widespread. They can be aired in SLA publications, such as this one. At national or regional meetings, workshops could be presented to enhance members' ethical awareness. There can also be blogs or wikis where information professionals discuss problematic situations, to which an advisory board can contribute.

The Information Ethics Advisory Council has tried twice to present ethics workshops at the SLA Annual

Conference. The first time, there wasn't sufficient registration for the workshop; the second time, because of budget constraints, we decided to opt out of offering a workshop. I've conducted presentations for chapters remotely, so that's always an option.

Photo courtesy of Tom Froehlich



**Tom Froehlich discusses a text with Don Wickes, chair of the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University.**

**Q: What benefit should information professionals and librarians expect to derive from these guidelines?**

They should expect to enhance their ethical awareness—particularly in terms of understanding the ethical dimensions of a specific context or activity—and appreciate the diversity of viewpoints and values that come to bear in ethical deliberation. The ultimate goal is not only to raise ethical awareness, but to develop a moral character so that they would instinctively know the right thing to do in a given situation and act in a manner befitting the best practices of an ethical information specialist.

How would they know if they've reached this goal? I'm sure you can create a survey tool that presents several scenarios and asks people to assess the ethical dimensions of each case. That's certainly possible. What's not possible, of course, is to ensure that people act ethically or operate with ethical character.



**Q: You teach courses at Kent State University about information architecture and information technology. How does your interest in and knowledge of these topics color your perspective on information ethics?**

I actually created the master's degree program in information architecture and knowledge management at Kent State. It resulted in the late 1990s from an interdisciplinary committee, of which I happened to take charge, to establish new careers for information professionals and new research initiatives with respect to collecting, managing and using information and knowledge. The program currently has three concentrations: knowledge management, user experience design and health informatics.

Given that I came to be in charge, there was a rapid and extensive learning curve on my part so that we could form an appropriate and innovative curriculum and research agendas. As a consequence, my interest in ethics was enhanced in relation to these new and emerging domains—ethical concerns in information sharing, the ethical dimensions of Web design and user experience, and ethical concerns in health records management. The ethical principles or values are the same in all of these contexts—justice, the moral dignity of human beings, utility—but the applications vary.

There really has been a dialectical pattern in this. My training in philosophy facilitated my understanding of, and helped me develop curricula for, emerging fields for information professionals, and that in turn broadened my philosophical understanding of these emerging fields as well as the traditional fields of library and information science.

**Q: How and why did you get involved in SLA?**

I received my PhD in philosophy at a time when there were very few jobs for people with a PhD in philosophy, so I ended up going back to school. I started working on an MBA, and I'm not MBA

material at all, and my brother said, "Why don't you take a course in computers?" I thought that sounded interesting, so I took a course in COBOL of all things, and it happened to be in the Information Science Department at the University of Pittsburgh. I thought, "This is simple—I can do this," so I changed my degree program to information science and got another master's degree. I got a job teaching at Syracuse University for four years, then finally ended up at Kent State in 1988. So my path to a career in information and library science took a rather circuitous route.

Ever since I entered this field, I've known about SLA. Because I was mostly involved with mainstream stuff, I mainly dealt with ASIS at first. When I developed this program at Kent State, I became much more aware of SLA and specialized libraries. When SLA came up with the Knowledge Management Division, that's when I became active in SLA and got connected to many members. That involvement led to my being invited to join the Information Ethics Advisory Council and then to be co-chair with Toni Carbo.

**Q: Looking ahead, say, 10 years, what impact would you like the ethical guidelines to have had on SLA and its members?**

I would hope that ethical values and concerns have become integral parts of the conscious and unconscious framework of each and every SLA member, and that they are using these values and concerns to enhance their organizations.

The guidelines themselves may change during that period—guidelines do change over time, but they usually don't change significantly. Having said that, things are changing rapidly as we go digital, so a lot of concerns that libraries focused on 10 years ago are changing focus now. I'm sure there will be modifications and additions as we continue this process. **SLA**

## SLA Professional Ethics Guidelines

SLA members shall—

Act with honesty, fairness and in good faith in serving and providing value to their employers, clients, and vendors.

Provide their employer, organization, or clients with the highest level of service, by delivering the best sources and services possible within organizational constraints and by improving the quality of and adding value to the information and knowledge they provide.

Enhance employer success by contributing to the mission, goals, policies and strategies of the organization.

Respect the intellectual property of their employers, clients and competitors, and within the legal and ethical constraints of the organization, inform their clients or employers of potential legal and ethical violations in the provision of sources or services.

Honor the privacy, rights, and reputation of individuals and organizations in the proper use of information content regardless of format or medium, adhering to the best practices of ensuring confidentiality.

Strive for excellence by seeking and maintaining professional knowledge and competencies in intellectual and information technologies in themselves, their colleagues, their organization and other professionals, including education for information literacy.

Represent themselves accurately concerning their education, competencies and experience to their employers, clients, colleagues and other professionals.

Avoid conflicts of interest while in the performance of their work.



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# Define Your Destination

**If we are to 'brand' ourselves as valuable contributors to our organizations, we need to start by identifying where we've been and where we're going.**

BY JILL STRAND, MLIS

Maybe the economic slowdown is to blame, but lately it seems you can't read a blog, newspaper or event description without seeing something about personal and professional branding. On the one hand, this is nothing new for special librarians—our profession has struggled for years with misconceptions about what we do. Yet, while our awareness of this problem has increased and several of us have success stories to share, branding continues to be a challenging area for many of us.

Coincidentally, around the time I was first asked about writing a regular column on marketing, I happened to read an article in the *Harvard Business Review* (2011) called "Reinventing Your Personal Brand." The article outlines five steps, and the first step—define your destination—seemed like a good place to start.

To know where you want to go, you sometimes need to reflect on where you've already been. In that spirit, I sent a question to the SLA Leadership List and asked recipients to share it with their units. The question is this: What is the biggest misconception folks have about your library, and/or what is your biggest challenge in marketing your library and its services?

Although I had my own experiences to draw upon and had heard stories from others over the years, I wanted to see if any themes emerged. The feedback was encouraging in that there was quite a lot of it, but it was also discouraging because of the many challenges it presented. Here are some of the common (and, by and large, familiar) themes that emerged, with relevant comments following each.

## 1. The term "library" and its association with physical space.

"Our greatest challenge is the word *library*. I don't know if it has bad connotations, or if it's not sexy, or if people just don't understand or don't want to understand that it's (we're) more than a collection of dusty books, spectacles and a bun. We're constantly having to explain what we do and why they need us."

—*Corporate librarian*

"The most exasperating comment I hear is, 'We have a library?' I'm a solo librarian serving a health system with over 9,500 employees.

—*Medical librarian*

## 2. The need for a library when everything is available on the Internet.

"One of the comments that a marketing person made to me was, 'Don't you just type it in and then hit a button and get the answers?' If marketing thinks that we have a 'magic button,' then I can assume that the rest of the firm does also. Electronic ≠ easy."

—*Law librarian*

"The biggest misconception has to be, 'I don't need the library because I can find what I need on the Internet.' [It] makes my blood boil, because it's a myth. The Internet is still the tip of the iceberg, albeit an ever-increasing tip. And, the good stuff isn't free! Who do you think pays for those online services that you get on your desktop? Maybe one day libraries will only be found by archaeologists, but it's gonna' take a long time to get to that day."

—*Military librarian*

"My biggest challenge is that the attorneys in my office are pretty sure we can get everything, and get it cheaply and quickly."

—*Law librarian*

"One thing I thought about during National Library Week, as we were working on getting people to various library events, was timing. A perpetual problem is that, if someone is not already your customer, it's hard to make them interested in you when they don't need you right at that moment. So, e-mails about training or chance conversations in the elevator don't get you anywhere, because the potential customer is doing fine without you. Then, when they [do] need you, they may not know it because



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they aren't already a customer, so they find another way to get what they need (or just do without). So, there are opportunities for your marketing to have a big impact, but they are small windows of time, and it's hard to sniff them out before they've passed."

—*Law librarian*

### 3. Promoting the breadth of library services.

"As we reduce print and increase electronic subscriptions, attorneys think we can also reduce staff. I am constantly talking to people about how electronic subscriptions are usually more time-intensive to manage than print. The biggest challenge in marketing the library is that they tend to ignore our e-mails or whatever we send out with announcements. I'm trying to figure out something that they'll look at."

—*Law librarian*

"Creating awareness of the many great electronic subscriptions we provide."

—*Corporate librarian*

"I think the biggest misconception is that they all see the word *library* and think [of a] dusty room of books. They forget the service angle and they forget the online collections that members have on their desktops wherever they are in the world."

—*Association librarian*

"Regrettably, though much has changed, much hasn't. In my consulting projects, dealing with many types of knowledge workers, I still hear 'Oh, we have a library?' and variations of 'The folks in the library are friendly, but they couldn't possibly help me [with my very esoteric topic].' Worse, there's, e.g., the IT Department deciding it knows best what the library should use for cataloging software."

—*Independent information professional*

### 4. Misunderstanding our professional level and skills.

"Senior management doesn't know that those with an MLIS are working as analysts, Web content managers, bioinformaticists, project developers, cybersecurity specialists, and more!"

—*Government librarian*

"People don't find value in what we do. They don't think about it; they see us as smart helpers, good people. People don't know we have master's degrees. People don't know what we do."

—*News librarian*

My colleagues and I are all trained scientists (like our customers), and some people forget this. We are more than document delivery. We can provide detailed searches, provide training on tools, advise on database software, have input into the design of new software projects. We are more than just Google—we have access to hundreds of sources that contain information that is not on Google."

—*Corporate librarian*

"One of my challenges is to be seen as more than 'password girl.' My marketing effort this year, so far, has been to write and send out a newsletter every other month. I am hoping that this is a subtle way of showing/reminding that I know stuff and that I can be helpful (so please contact me instead of using Google for two hours.)"

—*Law librarian*

## A Service, Not a Space

So, what do these stories tell us about where we want to go? When we envision our future as recognized and valued professionals, what does it look like? I won't pretend to have all the answers, but maybe this will suffice as a starting point:

1. We want to be seen as a critical service rather than just a space.
2. We want to be valued for the critical skills and services we offer, particularly in this Internet age when the information landscape is so overwhelmed and riddled with sinkholes of incorrect or incomplete

information.

3. We want to be able to quickly and succinctly describe what we are capable of doing and why it is critical for organizational success.
4. We want others to realize that our history (traditionally, quiet women working primarily with books) is not who we are today and that our skills take more than a high school diploma to master.

Sound like a good place to start? In my next column, I'll try to offer some further steps and share any suggestions or insights I receive from readers. Working together is a great way to increase our market share as individuals and as a profession. **SLA**

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# Becoming 'Future Ready' on Copyright Issues

Librarians must know about, share information about, and be aware of copyright law and licensing issues so they can be prepared for any changes the future brings.

BY LESLEY ELLEN HARRIS

If I had a crystal ball and could see into the future, what would the copyright law look like?

Would copyright as we know it continue to exist? Would there be more or fewer special provisions for libraries and other special interest groups? Would the doctrine of fair use have expanded or decreased? Would licensing electronic resources be easier, or more complex?

The notion of being “future ready” when it comes to copyright and licensing is consistent with my philosophy of a proactive approach to dealing with copyright and is essential to copyright compliance and managing copyright issues. With all of the effort and resources necessary to be copyright compliant, the future is the new present.

Of course, without a crystal ball, how can we predict if we will have orphan works legislation in the United States and specifically a law that actually allows particular uses of copyright-protected works in situations in which the owners of the works cannot be located? And how can we predict if and how a court of law will interpret fair use to, let's say, apply to various kinds of social networking or perhaps cloud computing? And how do we know how content will

be used—in what format, by whom, and on what latest technology? Obviously, we need to Google “crystal balls” to see if they are for sale on Amazon.com, then tell our fellow librarians about this through our Facebook pages!

## Taking Practical Steps

On the practical side, there are many things we can do to be “future ready” about copyright.

First, we should **know** all we can about copyright law and licensing. That way, when changes come about, we have a solid knowledge of copyright principles to help us understand those often complex changes.

Second, we should **share** what we know about copyright. One librarian in an organization should not be the sole repository of knowledge about copyright and licensing. Form a team, bring in a speaker, and conduct brown bag lunch sessions. Educate those around you about what they can and cannot do under copyright law and according to the licenses your organization signs.

Last but not least, we should **be aware**. This means keeping an eye on the content you are using. Are usage patterns changing? If so, are you still

getting top value from licensing aggregated content, or would you better benefit from licensing individual articles?

## 'A Series of Balances'

Recently, the director general of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, the United Nations' intellectual property agency) pointed out the challenges facing copyright and intellectual property in the years ahead. Speaking in Sydney, Australia, on 25 February, Francis Gurry laid out the issues facing the future of the copyright system.

“Few issues in intellectual property or, if I may suggest, cultural policy are as important as the consequences of the revolutionary structural change introduced by digital technology and the Internet,” Gurry said. Citing Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Gurry announced that because of the changing technological and social circumstances, the international intellectual property system will have to adapt in order remain relevant.

Gurry stated the problem as such:

How can society make cultural works available to the widest possible public at affordable prices while, at the same time, assuring a dignified economic existence to creators and performers and the business associates that help them to navigate the economic system? It is a question that implies a series of balances: between availability, on the one hand, and control of the distribution of works as a means of extracting value, on the other hand; between consumers and producers; between the interests of society and those of the individual creator; and between



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the short-term gratification of immediate consumption and the long-term process of providing economic incentives that reward creativity and foster a dynamic culture.

Gurry advocated taking an active approach to meeting this challenge, outlining three broad principles that can be instructive for organizations looking to get ahead of the curve. In his words, these principles are as follows:

- Neutrality to technology and to the business models developed in response to technology;
- Comprehensiveness and coherence in the policy response; and
- More simplicity in copyright.

These principles reflect the importance of knowing, sharing and being aware of copyright trends and how your organization is (or is not) benefiting from the changing circumstances. As Gurry pointed out in his speech, changes to copyright and intellectual property laws are likely to emerge, as

are alternative business models and licensing arrangements. These changes will affect how your library and organization access and manage content and information resources.

While it is important to look ahead to these changes, it is equally important to remain cognizant of the lessons of the past. As Gurry noted in his speech, "... the story is not over and, for the future, we should constantly remind ourselves that the history of the confrontation of our classical copyright world with the digital environment has been more a sorry tale of Luddite resistance than an example of intelligent engagement."

**Through a process of "intelligent engagement" with copyright and intellectual property laws and management initiatives, you can help ensure that you and your organization do not fall behind and are ready to tackle the coming changes.**

There may not be any crystal balls to help us determine the future, but through a process of "intelligent engagement" with copyright and intellectual property laws and management initiatives, you can help ensure that you and your organization do not fall behind and are ready to tackle the coming changes. How these changes will play out remains unclear; what is clear, though, is that they are on the horizon and are going to raise and address many more questions. With that in mind, be sure to know, share and remain aware. **SLA**

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# Megatrends: Information Explosion 2.0

Three decades ago, John Naisbitt predicted that 10 major trends would influence global society in the coming years. What trends are in store for the next 30 years?

BY STEPHEN ABRAM, MLS

This issue's theme, "future ready," got me to thinking: What "trend" books influenced my early career?

Back then, I made a habit of reading what my users were reading. I was working in a large consulting firm at the time, and the "business book" trend was exploding. I can still recall reading Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* and *The Third Wave* and Faith Popcorn's *Popcorn Report*. Of course, I read Tom Peters' *In Search of Excellence* and anything by Peter Drucker. And I was lucky enough to meet or see many of these authors at SLA conferences.

I now recognize that the early 1980s started my addiction to non-fiction business insight books. My gateway drug, er, book, was one that has influenced the course of my life—John Naisbitt's *Megatrends* (and a number of the follow-up editions that were also aided or co-authored by librarian Patricia Aburdene). I first read this book when it was published in 1980, the year I graduated with my MLS. It resonated with me in that the trends seemed so real and aligned with things I needed to know to guide my career and be, well, "future ready."

The trends Naisbitt identified were as follows:

1. Industrial society to information society;
2. Forced technology to high tech/high touch;
3. Institutional help to self-help;
4. Representative democracy to participatory democracy;
5. Hierarchies to networking;
6. Short term to long term;
7. Centralization to decentralization;
8. North to south and west;
9. National economy to world economy; and
10. Either/or to multiple option.

The exploration of each of the trends was the real meat of Naisbitt's work. In hindsight, Naisbitt was quite prescient, and I learned a lot from him (please recall that this was before the massive proliferation of personal computers, e-mail, the Internet, Websites, and streaming media). Reading *Megatrends* prepared me to be open to new ideas and perspectives about the future—much like my pre-teen years spent reading Marshall McLuhan and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn opened my mind to a broader global perspective. Reading does change lives!

## Future Megatrends

Anyway, this issue's theme made me think about what I might choose as the big megatrends right now for our specialized brand of information practice. I'm not as big a thinker as Naisbitt was, so my vision horizon is, sadly, still well within sight. That said, here are the 10 trends that I think are critical to consider over the next 20 years in our world of information.

I can guarantee that this list isn't comprehensive and that at least two events or inventions will occur during the next 20 years that will change the course of history. That noted, I believe that each of these will be completely transformative and result in discontinuous (versus incremental) change in our profession.

**Mobility.** You've heard this before ad nauseum. The real change is that we now have widely adopted devices that are truly personal and portable and not shared. This isn't merely the shared home phone or home PC, and it's usually quite separate from our work devices. It is an extension of "you" and knows things about you, and it accesses your social connections on so many levels. We have only touched the surface of the changes that mobility will cause.

**Social connectivity.** More than 75 percent of the Millennials are now in the workforce, with a high number of them already starting families. Higher education, meanwhile, is now dealing with the first wave of post-Millennials. These are two generational cohorts who are, to a large extent, forever connected to their friends, acquaintances, and colleagues. The changes already wrought by early-stage services

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like MySpace and Friendster and now LinkedIn, Tumblr, and Facebook have changed the world and promise to fundamentally put human social behaviors on steroids for exponential changes in the coming years.

**The cloud.** For those of us who grew up with installed software and optional upgrades, the cloud is a major perception shift. Over the next decade, as all files, software and services move to the cloud, we'll see the consequences of that change. At a minimum, it's likely we'll move past a world where outdated software on laggardly adopters' devices acts as a boat anchor against the tide of overall change. Consequently, the speed of change and improvements will increase. Think of the money and time wasted by supporting IE6 and dial phones instead of improving the telecommunications infrastructure.

**Geo-global.** Globalization as a trend has gone way beyond Naisbitt's original imagination. "Follow the sun" strategies are now the norm in many industries and sectors; indeed, such technological innovations as geospatial positioning systems allow for the customization and localization of services on a global scale. The combination of global industries and technology will change things quickly, for better or ill.

**Streaming.** I grew up with TV and the movies and a little radio—all separate from each other. Not only have entertainment and news changed as a result of the ability to stream content as video and audio, but major changes are in store as well for business collaboration and learning. The next 10 years will see technological change, as what have traditionally been viewed as entertainment-focused activities blossom in the worlds of education, research and business.

**Apps—or not.** Just about everyone I know shares their favorite apps with each other, and the debate over Apple versus Android is running hot. Will app strategies survive? I think they will in some way, but they'll evolve a lot using HTML5 and other neutral innovations that allow personal choice to be device agnostic.

**E-learning.** We've all heard that we'll have many careers before we retire and that our lives will need to be ones of continuous learning. In the past week I've been catching up with doctors, pharmacists, nurses and chiropractors, and everyone I spoke with lauded the online learning programs they were attending (usually over lunch) on a regular basis. I've also visited a bunch of university campuses and seen that every student, not just those enrolled in distance education programs, is immersed in a blended learning environment.

As we watch e-learning evolve as an academic strategy and extend into every workplace, we're seeing some very important transformations and changes emerge. This is personally relevant to individuals and also critical to economic adaptation on a national and global scale.

**Content curation.** It is a truism that there is too much information to absorb, but we haven't seen anything yet. As most books become digital and discoverable and most audio and video products follow the same path, and as "content mills" use this content or create targeted, inexpensive content to drive marketing and advertising, the need for professional content curators to serve up the best resources to meet user needs in education, business and research will increase massively.

**An instant world.** Expectations have permanently changed. I saw this when we first got a fax machine in the 1980s. Users would ask for some research to be sent over within minutes, and I'd have to explain that I had to perform the research first. (Sigh.) Now that issue is upon us in greater force.

To effectively deal with user demands for instant gratification, we must get better at the predictive development of answers and resources. Will that be hard? Yes, but we have no choice—we must develop the tools to accomplish this.

**Individual practice.** More librarians—in all styles and sectors and with many titles—will practice privately, just as many doctors, lawyers and accountants

do today. Over the coming decade, those of us who grab the brass ring will succeed and be increasingly valued for our ability to make sense of information explosion 2.0.

I am one of those people who find the future exciting. I don't believe that the future is an incremental extension of the past—rather, it is heavily influenced by people who animate the world they want and by inventions and events that create discontinuous change. I believe that we have the power to influence the future. We certainly can't influence the past.

Nostalgia is not a vision, it's a nice memory. **SLA**

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 Pennsylvania Convention Center  
 Philadelphia, Pa., USA  
<http://www.sla.org/content/events/conference/ac2011/index.cfm>

15-17  
**14th International Conference on Business Information Systems (BIS 2011)**  
 Poznan University of Economics  
 Poznan, Poland

## JULY 2011

4-8  
**13th International Society of Scientometrics and Informetrics Conference (ISSI 2011)**  
 International Society for Scientometrics and Informetrics (ISSI)  
 Durban, South Africa



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Saturday, 11 June 2011  
**Engaging Senior Management in the Library's Mission**  
 8:00 am – Noon  
 Members: \$199  
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Saturday, 11 June 2011  
**Implementing Library Mashups**  
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Sunday, 12 June 2011  
**Charting a Path to New Levels of Expertise, Employment and Career Satisfaction**  
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**Thinking Strategically: How to See the Big Picture**  
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Sunday, 12 June 2011  
**Communicating Effectively in the Workplace**  
 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
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Sunday, 12 June 2011  
**Copyright in Today's Digital World**  
 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
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 Non-members: \$299

## CERTIFICATE COURSES AT SLA 2011:

Saturday, 11 June 2011  
**CIC11b: Competitive Intelligence Services Management for Info Pros**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Members: \$495  
 Non-members: \$595

Sunday, 12 June 2011  
**CIC11c: Designing and Using the Intelligence Audit for Effective CI Practice**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Members: \$495  
 Non-members: \$595

Saturday, 11 June 2011  
**CCM600: Copyright Compliance and Management**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Members: \$395  
 Non-members: \$495

Sunday, 12 June 2011  
**CCM700: Teaching Others About Copyright**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Members: \$395  
 Non-members: \$495

Friday, 10 June 2011  
**KMKS03: The Knowledge Audit**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
 Members: \$495  
 Non-members: \$595

Saturday, 11 June 2011  
**KMKS01: Fundamentals of Knowledge Management and Knowledge Services**  
 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
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